This is a digital copy of a book that was preserved for generations on library shelves before it was carefully scanned by Google as part of a project to make the world's books discoverable online.

It has survived long enough for the copyright to expire and the book to enter the public domain. A public domain book is one that was never subject to copyright or whose legal copyright term has expired. Whether a book is in the public domain may vary country to country. Public domain books are our gateways to the past, representing a wealth of history, culture and knowledge that's often difficult to discover.

Marks, notations and other marginalia present in the original volume will appear in this file - a reminder of this book's long journey from the publisher to a library and finally to you.

Usage guidelines

Google is proud to partner with libraries to digitize public domain materials and make them widely accessible. Public domain books belong to the public and we are merely their custodians. Nevertheless, this work is expensive, so in order to keep providing this resource, we have taken steps to prevent abuse by commercial parties, including placing technical restrictions on automated querying.

We also ask that you:

+ *Make non-commercial use of the files* We designed Google Book Search for use by individuals, and we request that you use these files for personal, non-commercial purposes.

+ *Refrain from automated querying* Do not send automated queries of any sort to Google's system: If you are conducting research on machine translation, optical character recognition or other areas where access to a large amount of text is helpful, please contact us. We encourage the use of public domain materials for these purposes and may be able to help.

+ *Maintain attribution* The Google "watermark" you see on each file is essential for informing people about this project and helping them find additional materials through Google Book Search. Please do not remove it.

+ *Keep it legal* Whatever your use, remember that you are responsible for ensuring that what you are doing is legal. Do not assume that just because we believe a book is in the public domain for users in the United States, that the work is also in the public domain for users in other countries. Whether a book is still in copyright varies from country to country, and we can't offer guidance on whether any specific use of any specific book is allowed. Please do not assume that a book's appearance in Google Book Search means it can be used in any manner anywhere in the world. Copyright infringement liability can be quite severe.

About Google Book Search

Google's mission is to organize the world's information and to make it universally accessible and useful. Google Book Search helps readers discover the world's books while helping authors and publishers reach new audiences. You can search through the full text of this book on the web at `http://books.google.com/`

d. d.

CAROLUS JOANNES VAUGHAN, S. T. P.

SCHOL. HARROV. MAGISTER,

MDCCC

T. Fowell Buxton

MEMOIRS

OF

SIR THOMAS FOWELL BUXTON,

BART.

EDITED BY HIS SON,

CHARLES BUXTON, ESQ., B.A.

"The longer I live, the more I am certain that the great difference between men, between the feeble and the powerful, the great and the insignificant, is *energy*, — *invincible determination*, — a purpose once fixed, and then death or victory. That quality will do anything that can be done in this world; and no talents, no circumstances, no opportunities, will make a two-legged creature a man without it."

Extract of a Letter from Sir T. Fowell Buxton.

WITH A PORTRAIT AND WOODCUTS.

TWELFTH THOUSAND.

LONDON:
JOHN MURRAY, ALBEMARLE STREET.
1855.

"Who is the honest man?
He who doth still, and strongly, good pursue;
To God, his neighbour, and himself most true."

HERBERT.

PREFACE.

A GENERAL and very reasonable objection is made against memoirs written by near relatives, and yet the danger to be apprehended from their partiality is not perhaps quite so great as it might seem. At any rate it is not wholly avoided by transferring the task to a stranger. It has been well observed, that "biographers, translators, editors,—all, in short, who employ themselves in illustrating the lives or the writings of others,—are peculiarly exposed to the '*lues Boswelliana*,' or disease of admiration."* Now a near relative may be especially liable to this infirmity; but then he is especially on his guard against it. He cannot eulogise: he must state facts, and leave the reader to draw conclusions for himself.

The task of compiling my father's memoirs was placed in my hands by his executors, partly because those whose literary abilities would have pointed them out as fitted for the task, were not at leisure to undertake it; and partly because it involved the perusal of a large mass of private papers, which could not well have

* Macaulay's Essays, vol. ii. p. 146.

been submitted to the inspection of any one not a member of his family. I could hardly refuse so interesting, though responsible, a duty.

A considerable portion of this work relates to the emancipation of the slaves in the West Indies; and I cannot help feeling some anxiety lest it may give a false prominence to my father's exertions in the accomplishment of that event, which was, in fact, achieved by the strenuous efforts of many men, working in very different spheres. It was not for me to attempt to write the history of that extensive movement. The object set before me was to show, as plainly as possible, what sort of person my father was, so that the reader should feel as if he had been one of his most intimate friends. I was bound, therefore, to confine my narrative to his individual proceedings, excluding whatever did not bear, directly or indirectly, on the elucidation of his character. Hence it has resulted that very slight notice is taken in these pages of the exertions of my father's coadjutors, in achieving the downfal of British slavery.

It ought, perhaps, to be noticed, that the expressions of affection towards those (and especially one) most dear to my father, with which his letters and papers abound, have been generally omitted.

I beg most gratefully to acknowledge the valuable contributions I have received from several of my father's friends, the advice and assistance given by others, and the documents and papers put into my hands by those

who enjoyed intimate communication with him, before I was of an age to share in that privilege.

Since the first edition of this work was published, many anecdotes and letters have been communicated to me, which will be found, I think, to add considerably to the interest of the narrative.

London, 1848

CONTENTS.

CHAPTER I.

1786—1802.

Notices of the Buxton Family.—Mr. Buxton of Earl's Colne.—Birth of Thomas Fowell Buxton.—Childhood.—School-days.—His Mother's influence.—Abraham Plastow.—Bellfield.—Earlham.—Letters from Earlham - - - Pages 1—12

CHAPTER II.

1802—1807.

Education in Ireland.—Donnybrook.—Emmett's Rebellion.—Dublin University.—Correspondence.—Engagement to Miss H. Gurney.—Historical Society.—Escape from Shipwreck.—Correspondence.—Success at College.—Invitation to represent the University in Parliament.—His Marriage - - - - 13—27

CHAPTER III.

1807—1812.

Enters Truman's Brewery.—Occupations in London.—Letter from Mr. Twiss.—Correspondence.—Death of Edward Buxton.—Exertions in the Brewery - - - - 28—40

CHAPTER IV.

1812—1816.

First Speech in public.—The Rev. Josiah Pratt.—Increasing regard to Religion.—Dangerous Illness.—Its effect on his mind.—Removes to Hampstead.—Disappointments and Anxieties.—Reflections.—Narrow Escape.—Letter to Mr. J. J. Gurney - 41—56

CHAPTER V.

1816, 1817.

Adventure with a Mad Dog.—Distress in Spitalfields.—Mr. Buxton's Speech. — Letters. — Establishment of Prison Discipline Society — Death of Charles Buxton. — Journey on the Continent. — Letters. — Incident at the Brewery. — Book on Prison Discipline Pages 57—79

CHAPTER VI.

1818, 1819.

Election, 1818. — Letter from Mr. J. J. Gurney. — Thoughts on entering Parliament. — First speech on Criminal Law. — Committees on Criminal Law and Prison Discipline.—Letters.—Debate on the Manchester Riot - - - - - - 80—98

CHAPTER VII.

1820, 1821.

Election. — Domestic Afflictions. — Letters. — Cromer Hall. — Priscilla Gurney. — Correspondence. — Speech on Criminal Law 99—124

CHAPTER VIII.

SLAVERY. 1821—1823.

Mr. Buxton is chosen by Mr. Wilberforce as his Parliamentary successor. — Common confusion of "Slavery" with "Slave Trade." — Previous impressions on Mr. Buxton's mind. — Priscilla Gurney's dying words. — He studies the subject. — Long deliberations. — Fear of Servile revolt. — Undertakes to advocate the question. — Letters from Mr. Wilberforce. — Reflections. — Suttee. — The Quaker's Petition.—Letter to Earl Bathurst. — The first debate on Slavery. — Mr. Canning's amendments. — Ameliorations in the Slave's condition recommended to the Colonists. — Letter to Sir James Mackintosh - - - - 125—145

CHAPTER IX.

SLAVERY. 1823—1826.

Excitement in the West Indies.—The Negroes refuse to work.—Severe measures.—Death of the Missionary Smith.—The Abolitionists bitterly reproached.—Mr. Buxton's plan.—Interviews with Mr. Canning.—Popular clamours.—The Government draws back.—Anxieties and doubts.—Letter from Mr. J. J. Gurney.—The debate.—The Government gives way.—Mr. Buxton attacks them.—Encouragements from Mr. Wilberforce.—Mr. Brougham's Speech on Smith's case.—Its effect on the country.—Mr. Wilberforce retires.—The small number of Abolitionists in Parliament.—Dr. Lushington.—Mr. Macaulay.—Mr. Buxton's Policy.—Free people of colour.—Treatment of Mr. Shrewsbury.—Debate.—Deliberations.—The London Petition.—Mr. Denman's motion.—A year's pause - - - - - Pages 146—168

CHAPTER X.

1822—1826.

Cromer Hall.—Shooting.—A courteous Poacher.—The sporting Professor.—Mr. Buxton's delight in Horses.—His influence over the young.—Maxims.—Letter to a Nephew.—His love of a manly character.—His gentleness.—Shipwreck at Cromer.—Perilous exploit.—His religious influence.—Kindness to the poor.—Letter on style.—Correspondence.—Martin's Act.—Correspondence.—Letter to a Clergyman on his new house 169—190

CHAPTER XI.

1826, 1827.

The Mauritius Slave Trade.—Mr. Byam and General Hall.—Mr. Buxton studies and undertakes the question.—Touching incident.—Debate.—Committee of Inquiry.—Stormy election at Weymouth.—Letters.—Laborious investigations.—Frightful attack of Illness.—Unexpected Recovery - - - 191—202

CHAPTER XII.

1827, 1828.

Meditations.—Rev. C. Simeon.—Letter to Lord W. Bentinck.—Suttee abolished.—Mr. Buxton removes to Northrepps.—Debate on Slavery.—Mr. Buxton's reply.—The free people of colour.—Interview with Mr. Huskisson.—Thoughts on his Illness Pages 203—215

CHAPTER XIII.

1828, 1829.

The Hottentots.—Dr. Philip.—Van Riebech's regrets.—Miseries of the Hottentots.—Dr. Philip's Researches.—Mr. Buxton's motion.—The Government acquiesces.—Letter from Dr. Philip.—The Order in Council sent out.—Letter to Mr. J. J. Gurney.—The Hottentots set free.—Alarms die away.—Happy result.—The Kat River Settlement - - - - 216—226

CHAPTER XIV.

1829.

Catholic Emancipation.—Reflections.—The Mauritius Slave Trade.—Agreeable news.—The Mauritius case revived.—Letter to Mr. Twiss.—The Government admit the existence of the Slave Trade.—Its complete extinction.—Mr. George Stephen.—Mr. Jeremie - - - - - - 227—239

CHAPTER XV.

1829, 1830.

Letters.—Papers.—Mitigation of the Penal Code.—Illness and Death of his second Son - - - - 240—255

CHAPTER XVI.

SLAVERY. 1830.

The public begins to arouse itself.—Increasing popularity of the subject.—Gradual Change in the views of the Leaders.—Mitigating measures despaired of.—Determination to put down Slavery thoroughly and at once.—Spirited Meetings in London and Edinburgh.—The Government outstripped by the Abolitionists.—Mr. Buxton's appeal to the electors.—The cruelty of Slavery in its mildest form - - - - - 256—265

CHAPTER XVII.

SLAVERY. 1831.

Religious Meditations.—The Duke's declaration.—Change of Ministry.—The Whig Government does not take up the subject of Slavery.—Quaker's Petition.—Decrease of the Slave population. —Debate.—The Government still tries to lead the Colonists to adopt mitigating measures.—Parliament dissolved.—Letter from Bellfield.—Letter to a son at college.—Dinner at the Brewery. —Anecdotes. — Reflections. — Death of Mr. North. — Correpondence - - - - - Pages 266—289

CHAPTER XVIII.

SLAVERY. 1832.

Insurrection in Jamaica. — Lords' Committee. — Letters to Lord Suffield. — Speech at public meeting. — Position of parties. — State of the Colonies.—Policy of the Government. — Debate, May 24. — Mr. Buxton insists on dividing the House.—Formation of the Committee.—Religious Persecutions in Jamaica. — Result of the Committee.—Letters - - - - 290—310

CHAPTER XIX.

SLAVERY. 1833.

Opening of the Session.—Government undertakes the Slavery question.—Increase of public feeling.—Anxiety as to the intentions of Government. — Negotiations. — Day fixed for the Motion.— Disappointment.—Agitation resolved on. — Whitely's Pamphlet. —Compensation. — Anti-slavery meeting. — The nation aroused. —Delegates summoned.—Meeting of Delegates - 311—328

CHAPTER XX.

SLAVERY. 1833.

Debate, May 14. — Mr. Stanley's speech. — Resolutions passed.— Blame attributed to Mr. Buxton. — Letters. — Bill brought in. — Debate on Apprenticeship — On Compensation.—Progress of the Bill through the House of Commons — Through the House of Lords.—Passed.—Letters - - - - 329—347

CHAPTER XXI.

1833, 1834.

Letters.—Good accounts from the West Indies.—Baron Rothschild —Occupations of the Spring and Summer.—Endeavours for the benefit of the Negroes.—Rev. J. M. Trew.—The day of Freedom, August 1. 1834.—Conduct of the Negroes.—Letters Pages 348—367

CHAPTER XXII.

1834, 1835.

Inquiry into the treatment of Aboriginal Tribes in British colonies. —Address to the King on the subject.—Caffre war.—Aborigines Committee.—Letters.—Lord Glenelg's Despatch.—Visit from a Caffre Chief.—Mr. Buxton turns to the subject of the Slave Trade of foreign nations.—An address to the King agreed to 368—384

CHAPTER XXIII.

1835, 1836.

Accounts from the West Indies.—Motion for Committee of Inquiry. —Correspondence.—Writings, January, 1836.—Committee on Apprenticeship, March, 1836.—Letters.—Letter from Mr. Johnston.—Irish Church questions.—Speech on Irish Tithe Bill, June, 1836 - - - - - - 385—403

CHAPTER XXIV.

1836.

Scotland.—Capercailzie.—Letters.—Habits of life at Northrepps. —Order.—Love of Poetry.—His domestic Character.—Letters 404—424

CHAPTER XXV.

1837, 1838.

Aborigines Report.—Correspondence.—Election.—Defeat at Weymouth.—Letters.—Efforts to shorten the Apprenticeship of the Negroes.—Mr. Buxton's Hesitation.—The Apprenticeship abolished - - - - - - 425—441

CHAPTER XXVI.

1838.

New plan for the Suppression of the Slave Trade.—Laborious investigations.— Collection of evidence. — Letter to Lord Melbourne. —Communications with the Government.—Abstract of his views. —Horrors of the trade.—Capabilities of Africa Pages 442—452

CHAPTER XXVII.

1838, 1839.

Communications with Government, and with private individuals. — African Civilisation Society.—Preparation of "The Slave Trade, and its Remedy," for publication.—Departure for Italy 453—466

CHAPTER XXVIII.

1839, 1840.

Journey through France and Italy.—Mont Cenis in a snow-storm. —Rome. — Italian Field Sports.—Boar hunting. — Shooting on the Numician Lake.— Adventure with Robbers.— The Jesuits —St. Peter's and the Vatican.—Prisons and Hospitals of Rome 467—493

CHAPTER XXIX.

1840.

Mr. Richard's Recollections. — Prisons at Civita Vecchia. — Italian Banditti. —Gasparoni. — Illness. — Naples. — Pompeii. — Prospect of a war between Naples and England. — Excitement at Naples.— Mr. Buxton returns to England - - - 494—522

CHAPTER XXX.

1840, 1841.

Great public meeting in Exeter Hall. — Prince Albert in the chair. —Mr. Buxton created a Baronet.—Preparations for the Niger Expedition. — Agricultural Association. — Ventilation of the ships. — Sir Fowell Buxton's health begins to fail. — "The friend of Africa."—Public meetings.—Letter to the Rev. J. W. Cunningham. — Day of Prayer for the Expedition. — Prince Albert's visit to the vessels. — The Expedition sails. — Letter to Captain Trotter - - - - - 523—539

CHAPTER XXXI.

1841.

Correspondence. — Journey to Scotland. — Deer Stalking. — Return home. — Good news from the Niger Expedition. — Account of its progress. — Scenery of the Niger. — Treaty concluded with Obi. — His Intelligence and Courage. — The Attah of Eggarah. — Sickness appears on board. — The Model Farm. — The Soudan and Wilberforce sent down the river. — The news reaches England. — Distress of Sir Fowell Buxton. — The Albert proceeds up the river. — Dense population. — Agricultural produce in the markets. — Some slaves liberated. — The Nufis. — Increased sickness on board the Albert. — It returns to the Sea. — Perilous descent of the river. — Mortality on board. — Death of Captain Bird Allen. — Opinions of the Commissioners as to the Expedition

Pages 540—562

CHAPTER XXXII.

1842, 1843.

Declining Health. — Efforts and views regarding Africa. — The Model Farm broken up. — Letter from the Bishop of Calcutta. — Country pursuits. — Planting. — Characteristic Anecdotes

563—581

CHAPTER XXXIII.

1843, 1844.

Bath. — Summer at Northrepps. — Continued and increasing Illness — Correspondence with Sir Robert Peel and the Bishop of Calcutta - - - - - - 582—594

CHAPTER XXXIV.

1844, 1845.

Summer at Northrepps. — Anxiety respecting Sierra Leone. — Mr. Freeman. — Religious feelings. — Marriage of his Son. — Increasing Illness. — His Death and Interment - - - 595—604

Testimonial to his Memory - - - - - 605

Letter from the Rev. J. W. Cunningham - - 606—612

Appendix to Chapter XVII. - - - - - 613

LIFE

OF

SIR THOMAS FOWELL BUXTON,

BART.

CHAPTER I.

1786—1802.

NOTICES OF THE BUXTON FAMILY. — MR. BUXTON OF EARL'S COLNE. — BIRTH OF THOMAS FOWELL BUXTON. — CHILDHOOD. — SCHOOL DAYS. — HIS MOTHER'S INFLUENCE. — ABRAHAM PLASTOW. — BELL-FIELD. — EARLHAM. — LETTERS FROM EARLHAM.

THE family from which Sir Thomas Fowell Buxton was descended, resided, about the middle of the 16th century, at Sudbury in Suffolk, and subsequently at Coggeshall in Essex. At the latter place, William Buxton, his lineal ancestor, died in 1624. Thomas, the son of William Buxton, claimed and received from the Heralds' College, in 1634, the arms borne by the family of the same name settled before 1478 at Tybenham in Norfolk, and now represented by Sir Robert Jacob Buxton, Bart.

Isaac Buxton, a merchant, and the fifth in direct descent from William, married Sarah Fowell, an heiress; connected with the family of the Fowells, of Fowelscombe in Devonshire.* From her was derived the name of Fowell, first borne by her eldest son, who married Anna, daughter of Osgood Hanbury, Esq., of Holfield Grange in Essex. The first Thomas Fowell Buxton

* See Burke's Extinct Baronetage.

lived at Earl's Colne in the same county, but was residing at Castle Hedingham, when his eldest son, Thomas Fowell, the subject of this memoir, was born, on the 1st of April, 1786.

Mr. Buxton was a man of a gentle and kindly disposition, devoted to field sports, and highly popular in his neighbourhood, where he exercised hospitality on a liberal scale. Having been appointed High Sheriff of the county, he availed himself of the authority of his office to relieve the miseries of the prisoners under his superintendence, visiting them sedulously, notwithstanding the prevalence of the jail fever. He died at Earl's Colne in 1792, leaving his widow with three sons and two daughters.*

The eldest boy, Thomas Fowell, was at this time six years old. He was a vigorous child, and early showed a bold and determined character. As an instance of this it may be mentioned, that when quite a child, while walking with his uncle, Mr. Hanbury, he was desired to give a message to a pig-driver who had passed along the road. He set off in pursuit; and although one of his shoes was soon lost in the mud, he pushed on through lonely and intricate lanes, tracking the driver by the footmarks of his pigs, for nearly three miles, into the town of Coggeshall; nor did he stop until he had overtaken the man, and delivered his message.

One who knew the boy well in his early days said of him, "He never was a child; he was a man when in petticoats." At the age of only four years and a half,

* Anna, afterwards married to William Forster, Esq., of Bradpole in Dorsetshire.
Thomas Fowell.
Charles, married Martha, daughter of Edmund Henning, Esq., and died in 1817.
Sarah Maria, died in 1839.
Edward North, died in 1811.

he was sent to a school at Kingston, where he suffered severely from ill-treatment; and his health giving way (chiefly from the want of sufficient food) he was removed, shortly after his father's death, to the school of Dr. Charles Burney, at Greenwich, where his brothers afterwards joined him. Here he had none of the hardships to endure, to which he had been subjected at Kingston, and he found in Dr. Burney a kind and judicious master. Upon one occasion, he was accused by an usher of talking during school time, and desired to learn the collect, epistle, and gospel, as a punishment. When Dr. Burney entered the school, young Buxton appealed to him, stoutly denying the charge. The usher as strongly asserted it; but Dr. Burney stopped him, saying, "I never found the boy tell a lie, and will not disbelieve him now."

He does not appear to have made much progress in his studies, and his holidays spent at Earl's Colne, where his mother continued to reside, left a deeper trace in his after life, than the time spent at school. Mrs. Buxton's character has been thus briefly described by her son: "My mother," he says, "was a woman of a very vigorous mind, and possessing many of the generous virtues in a very high degree. She was large-minded about every thing; disinterested almost to an excess; careless of difficulty, labour, danger, or expense, in the prosecution of any great object. She had a masculine understanding, great power of mind, great vigour, and was very fearless. With these nobler qualities were united some of the imperfections, which belong to that species of ardent and resolute character." She belonged to the Society of Friends. Her husband being a member of the Church of England, their sons were baptized in infancy; nor did she ever exert her influence to bring

them over to her own persuasion. She was more anxious to give them a deep regard for the Holy Scriptures, and a lofty moral standard, than to quicken their zeal about the distinctive differences of religious opinion. Her system of education had in it some striking features. There was little indulgence, but much liberty. The boys were free to go where they would, and do what they pleased, and her eldest son especially was allowed to assume almost the position of master in the house. But, on the other hand, her authority, when exercised, was paramount over him, as over his brothers and sisters. On being asked by the mother of a large and ill-managed family, whether the revolutionary principles of the day were not making way among her boys, her reply was, "I know nothing about revolutionary principles: my rule is that imposed on the people of Boston, —'implicit obedience, unconditional submission.'" Yet the character of her son Fowell was not without some strong touches of wilfulness. He has described himself, in more than one of his papers, as having been in his boyhood "of a daring, violent, domineering temper." When this was remarked to his mother, "Never mind," she would say; "he is self-willed now—you will see it turn out well in the end."

During one Christmas vacation, on her return home from a brief absence, she was told that "Master Fowell had behaved very ill, and struck his sister's governess." She therefore determined to punish him, by leaving him at school during the ensuing Easter holidays. Meanwhile, however, some disorderly conduct took place in the school, and two boys, who had behaved worst in the affair, were likewise to remain there during the vacation. Mrs. Buxton was unwilling to leave him alone with these boys, and on the first day of the holidays

she went to Greenwich and fairly told Fowell her difficulty; ending by saying that, rather than subject him to their injurious influence, she was prepared to forfeit her word and allow him to come home with her other sons. His answer was, "Mother, never fear that I shall disgrace you or myself; my brothers are ready, and so is my dinner." After such a reply the resolution of a less determined parent must have given way; but she undauntedly left him to his punishment.

Her aim appears to have been, to give her boys a manly and robust character; and, both by precept and example, she strove to render them self-denying, and, at the same time, thoughtful for others.

Long afterwards, when actively occupied in London, her son wrote to her:—"I constantly feel, especially in action and exertion for others, the effects of principles early planted by you in my mind." He particularly alluded to the abhorrence of slavery and the slave trade, with which she had imbued him.

His size and strength well fitted him for country amusements; and he early acquired a strong taste for hunting, shooting, and fishing, under the auspices of the gamekeeper, Abraham Plastow. This gamekeeper was one of those characters occasionally to be met with in the country, uniting straightforward honest simplicity with great shrewdness and humour. He was well-fitted to train his three young masters in those habits of fearlessness and hardihood, which their mother wished them to possess. His influence over them is thus described by Mr. Buxton, in a letter dated

"Cromer Hall, August 23. 1825.

"My father died when I was very young, and I became at ten years old almost as much the master of the family as I am of this family at the present moment. My mother, a woman

of great talents and great energy, perpetually inculcated on my brothers and sisters that they were to obey me, and I was rather encouraged to play the little tyrant. She treated me as an equal, conversed with me, and led me to form and express my opinions without reserve. This system had obvious and great disadvantages, but it was followed by some few incidental benefits. Throughout life I have acted and thought for myself; and to this kind of habitual decision I am indebted for all the success I have met with.

"My 'guide, philosopher, and friend,' was Abraham Plastow, the gamekeeper; a man for whom I have ever felt, and still feel, a very great affection. He was a singular character: in the first place, this tutor of mine could neither read nor write, but his memory was stored with various rustic knowledge. He had more of natural good sense and what is called mother-wit, than almost any person I have met with since: a knack which he had of putting every thing into new and singular lights made him, and still makes him, a most entertaining, and even intellectual companion. He was the most undaunted of men: I remember my youthful admiration of his exploits on horseback. For a time he hunted my uncle's hounds, and his fearlessness was proverbial. But what made him particularly valuable were his principles of integrity and honour. He never said or did a thing in the absence of my mother of which she would have disapproved. He always held up the highest standard of integrity, and filled our youthful minds with sentiments as pure and as generous as could be found in the writings of Seneca or Cicero. Such was my first instructor, and, I must add, my best; for I think I have profited more by the recollection of his remarks and admonition, than by the more learned and elaborate discourses of all my other tutors. He was our playfellow and tutor; he rode with us, fished with us, shot with us upon all occasions." *

* This faithful servant died in 1836. "The tears," said Mr. Hanbury, who visited him on his death-bed, "trickled down his goodly countenance while speaking of his rides long ago with his young master."

The following inscription on a mural tablet, in Earl's Colne churchyard, erected by the contributions of his neighbours, speaks their sense of his worth:—

"To the memory of Abraham Plastow, who lived for more than half a century, servant and gamekeeper, in the families of Thomas Fowell Buxton and Osgood Gee, Esqrs.: —

From a Sketch by Priscilla Buxton.

BELLFIELD.

One among many anecdotes remembered of this man may be recorded. The young Buxtons had been sent out hunting, and, as usual, under Abraham's care. As they were approaching the scene of sport, Fowell made use of an improper expression, upon which the game-keeper insisted upon his returning home at once, and carried his point.

Occasionally the holidays were passed by the children with their grandmother, either in London or at Bellfield, her country-house, near Weymouth.* The formality of her life in town was rather unpalatable to them: even the exceptions to her rules were methodically arranged; her Sunday discipline, for example, was very strict, but on one (and only one) Sunday in the year she gave the children the treat of a drive in the park. A visit to Bellfield was more attractive, and there young Buxton spent many of the happiest hours of his boyhood. The house, which, at the death of his grandmother, became his own, (though till lately inhabited by his uncle Mr. Charles Buxton,) is beautifully situated, commanding fine views of Weymouth Bay and the Island of Portland. To this spot he ever continued much attached, and his letters from thence always mention his great enjoyment of its beauties. He thus refers to an incident which occurred when he was a lad at Bellfield: —

"Of humble station, yet of sterling worth;
Awaiting Heaven, but yet content on earth;
Quaint, honest, simple-hearted, kind, sincere:
Such was the man, to all our village dear!
He liv'd in peace, in hope resigned his breath.
Go—learn a lesson from his life and death."

* Soon after her marriage with Mr. Isaac Buxton, they had visited this estate together, and she incidentally remarked to him, what a beautiful spot it would be for a country-seat. The next year, when she accompanied him thither again, she found, to her astonishment, instead of mere fields and hedges, an elegant country-house, surrounded by lawns and gardens.

"In passing with my brother Edward in a very small boat from Weymouth to Poxwell, a sudden storm came on and the boat filled. We turned to the shore; he could not swim, I could. I placed him in the front of the boat and rowed with all my force through the surf; the boat overturned, threw him on shore, but I went down. I swam to the boat, and after considerable difficulty was also thrown on shore through the surf."

Weymouth was at this period the favourite resort of George III., and the King and royal family frequently visited Mrs. Buxton. Her grandchildren always retained a vivid impression of the cordial kindness of their royal guests.

At the age of fifteen, after spending eight years at Dr. Burney's, without making any great advances in learning, he persuaded his mother to allow him to reside at home; and there he remained for many months, devoting the chief part of his time to sporting, and the remainder to desultory reading. When no active amusement presented itself, he would sometimes spend whole days in riding about the lanes on his old pony, with an amusing book in his hand, while graver studies were entirely laid aside. At the same time his friends attempted to correct the boyish roughness of his manners by a system of ridicule and reproof, which greatly discouraged and annoyed him. It was indeed a critical time for his character; but the germ of nobler qualities lay below; a genial influence was alone wanting to develop it; and, through the kindness of Providence, as he used emphatically to acknowledge, that influence was at hand. Before this period he had become acquainted with John, the eldest son of Mr. John Gurney, of Earlham Hall, near Norwich, with whose family his own was distantly connected, and, in the autumn of 1801, he paid his friend a visit at his father's house.

Mr. Gurney had for several years been a widower. His family consisted of eleven children; three elder daughters, on the eldest of whom the charge of the rest chiefly devolved, the son whom we have mentioned, a group of four girls nearer Fowell Buxton's age, and three younger boys. He was then in his sixteenth year, and was charmed by the lively and kindly spirit which pervaded the whole party, while he was surprised at finding them all, even the younger portion of the family, zealously occupied in self-education, and full of energy in every pursuit, whether of amusement or of knowledge. They received him as one of themselves, early appreciating his masterly, though still uncultivated, mind; while, on his side, their cordial and encouraging welcome seemed to draw out all his latent powers. He at once joined with them in reading and study, and from this visit may be dated a remarkable change in the whole tone of his character: he received a stimulus, not merely in the acquisition of knowledge, but in the formation of studious habits and intellectual tastes; nor could the same influence fail of extending to the refinement of his disposition and manners.

Earlham itself possessed singular charms for their young and lively party. They are described at the time of his visit as spending the fine autumn afternoons in sketching and reading under the old trees in the park, or in taking excursions, some on foot, some on horseback, into the country round; wandering homeward towards evening, with their drawings and the wild flowers they had found. The roomy old hall, also, was well fitted for the cheerful, though simple hospitalities which Mr. Gurney delighted to exercise, especially towards the literary society, for which Norwich was at that time distinguished.

A characteristic anecdote of Mr. Gurney has been recorded. He was a strict preserver of his game, and accordingly had an intense repugnance to every thing bordering on poaching. Upon one occasion, when walking in his park, he heard a shot fired in a neighbouring wood — he hurried to the spot, and his naturally placid temper was considerably ruffled on seeing a young officer with a pheasant at his feet, deliberately reloading his gun. As the young man, however, replied to his rather warm expressions by a polite apology, Mr. Gurney's wrath was somewhat allayed; but he could not refrain from asking the intruder what *he* would do, if he caught a man trespassing on his premises. "I would ask him in to luncheon," was the reply. The serenity of this impudence was not to be resisted. Mr. Gurney not only invited him to luncheon, but supplied him with dogs and a gamekeeper, and secured him excellent sport for the remainder of the day.*

Mr. Gurney belonged to the Society of Friends; but his family was not brought up with any strict regard to its peculiarities. He put little restraint on their domestic amusements; and music and dancing were among their favourite recreations. The third daughter, afterwards the well-known Mrs. Fry, had indeed united herself more closely to the Society of Friends †; but her example in this respect had not as yet been followed by any of her brothers or sisters.

Such was the family of which Fowell Buxton might be said to have become a member, at this turning point of his life. The following letters were written to his mother during his visit to Earlham.

* This anecdote, which is still fresh in the memory of several of Mr. Gurney's children, was borrowed by Hook, in his tale of Gilbert Gurney.

† See Memoirs of the Life of Elizabeth Fry. Charles Gilpin, 1847.

"My dear Mother, "Earlham, Oct. 1801.

"I was very much pleased with all your last, excepting that part in which you mention the (to me at least) hateful subject of St. Andrew's.*

"It gives me pain to write, because it will you to read, that my aversion is, ever was, and ever will be invincible; nevertheless, if you command, I will obey. You will exclaim, 'How ungrateful, after all the pleasure he has had.' Pleasure, great pleasure, I certainly have had, but not sufficient to counterbalance the unhappiness the pursuance of your plan would occasion me; but, as I said before, I will obey.

"If you think fit, I shall return to Cromer on Wednesday. Northrepps is perfectly delightful. I have dined many times with Mr. Pym: a letter he has received from his brother in Ireland says, 'Nothing but speculation, peculation, and paper, exists in this unhappy country.' I am going to Lord Wodehouse's this morning, and to a ball at Mr. Kett's at night."

"My dear Mother, "Earlham, Nov. 24. 1801.

"Your letter was brought while I was deliberating whether to stay here or meet you in London. The contents afforded me real joy. Before, I almost feared you would think me encroaching; yet Mr. Gurney is so good-tempered, his daughters are so agreeable, and John is so thoroughly delightful, and his conversation so instructive, which is no small matter with you I know, that you must not be surprised at my accepting your offer of a few days' longer stay in this country. Whilst I was at Northrepps, I did little else but read books of entertainment (except now and then a few hours Latin and Greek), ride, and play at chess. But since I have been at Earlham, I have been very industrious. The Prince † paid us a visit this morning, and dines here on Thursday. "Your affectionate son,

"T. F. BUXTON."

"My visit here has completely answered," he says with boyish enthusiasm, in his last letter from Mr. Gurney's house. "I have spent two months as happily as possible; I have learned as much, though in a dif-

* His mother had proposed to send him to the College at St. Andrew's.
† Prince William of Gloucester.

ferent manner, as I should at Colne, and have got thoroughly acquainted with the most agreeable family in the world."

In December 1801 he returned to Earl's Colne; but his mind never lost the impulse which it had received during his stay at Earlham. Many years afterwards he thus refers to this early friendship, which he places first in an enumeration of the blessings of his life.

"I know no blessing of a temporal nature (and it is not only temporal) for which I ought to render so many thanks as my connexion with the Earlham family. It has given a colour to my life. Its influence was most positive and pregnant with good, at that critical period between school and manhood. They were eager for improvement—I caught the infection. I was resolved to please them, and in the College of Dublin, at a distance from all my friends, and all control, their influence, and the desire to please them, kept me hard at my books, and sweetened the toil they gave. The distinctions I gained at College (little valuable as distinctions, but valuable because habits of industry, perseverance, and reflection, were necessary to obtain them), these boyish distinctions were exclusively the result of the animating passion in my mind, to carry back to them the prizes which they prompted and enabled me to win."

CHAPTER II.

1802—1807.

EDUCATION IN IRELAND. — DONNYBROOK. — EMMETT'S REBELLION. — DUBLIN UNIVERSITY. — CORRESPONDENCE. — ENGAGEMENT TO MISS H. GURNEY. — HISTORICAL SOCIETY. — ESCAPE FROM SHIPWRECK. — CORRESPONDENCE. — SUCCESS AT COLLEGE. — INVITATION TO REPRESENT THE UNIVERSITY IN PARLIAMENT. — HIS MARRIAGE.

As there were reasons for expecting that her son would inherit considerable property in Ireland, Mrs. Buxton deemed it advisable that he should complete his education at Dublin; and accordingly, in the winter of 1802, he was placed in the family of Mr. Moore of Donnybrook, who prepared pupils for the university. It was shortly before the Christmas holidays that he took up his abode at Donnybrook, and he then found himself inferior to every one of his companions in classical acquirements; but he spent the vacation in such close study, that on the return of the other pupils, he stood as the first among them.

Late in life he thus recalls this period in a letter to one of his sons, then under the roof of a private tutor: —

"You are now at that period of life in which you must make a turn to the right or to the left. You must now give proofs of principle, determination, and strength of mind, — or you must sink into idleness, and acquire the habits and character of a desultory, ineffective young man; and if once you fall to that point, you will find it no easy matter to rise again.

"I am sure that a young man may be very much what he pleases. In my own case it was so. I left school, where I had learnt little or nothing, at about the age of fourteen. I spent

the next year at home, learning to hunt and shoot. Then it was that the prospect of going to College opened upon me, and such thoughts as I have expressed in this letter occurred to my mind. I made my resolutions, and I acted up to them: I gave up all desultory reading—I never looked into a novel or a newspaper—I gave up shooting. During the five years I was in Ireland, I had the liberty of going when I pleased to a capital shooting place. I never went but twice. In short, I considered every hour as precious, and I made every thing bend to my determination not to be behind any of my companions,—and thus I speedily passed from one species of character to another. I had been a boy fond of pleasure and idleness, reading only books of unprofitable entertainment—I became speedily a youth of steady habits of application, and irresistible resolution. I soon gained the ground I had lost, and I found those things which were difficult and almost impossible to my idleness, easy enough to my industry; and much of my happiness and all my prosperity in life have resulted from the change I made at your age. It all rests with yourself. If you seriously resolve to be energetic and industrious, depend upon it you will for your whole life have reason to rejoice that you were wise enough to form and to act upon that determination."

From Donnybrook he writes to his mother,—

"Tell my Uncle Hanbury that no two clerks in his brew-house are together so industrious as I am, for I read morning, noon, and night."

During his stay at this place, the country was disturbed by the breaking out of the "Kilwarden rebellion," instigated by the unfortunate Robert Emmett. To meet the danger, volunteer corps were hastily organised, one of which Mr. Buxton joined as a lieutenant. The current reports of the day are thus sketched by him in his letters to his mother:—

"Everybody abuses the Lord-Lieutenant. He received information from all parts of the kingdom that the rising was to take place on Saturday night, and all the preparation he made was to send 2500 men to take care of his house and family at

the Park. The soldiers in Dublin had no ammunition. Colonel Littlehales, Mr. Marsden, and every officer of the Castle, were away from their posts; and for two hours after the rising began, and while the rebels were murdering Lord Kilwarden, Colonel Brown, and all the soldiers they could catch, nothing was done by government.

"After the first alarm, however, had subsided, the soldiers collected in small parties, and the rebels were soon put to the rout; before morning, 10,000 pikes were taken, all the prisons in Dublin were filled with rebels, and from 200 to 300 are supposed to have been killed. Isaac and I watched last night at Donnybrook, with our pistols loaded, for it was expected that they would attack the outskirts. However, they did not come. A great many Lucan people were found dead in Dublin. Every noted rebel was seen going to Dublin on Saturday evening. The gardener and workmen say there were 600 rebels at Mr. North's gate that night. Only two mails came into Dublin on Sunday—one was stopped at Lucan and another at Maynooth."

"Dublin, August 7. 1803.

"Dublin is in appearance perfectly quiet again, but the *minds* of the people are in rebellion. Pym, who goes by the name of Lord Sage, says this is by far a more dangerous rebellion than the last, as it is more concealed. The plan was for three bodies of 6000 men each to enter Dublin; one party to take the Castle, another the barracks, the other to spread about the city and murder every Protestant. Luckily, the hearts of all but about 6000 failed. The attack was to have commenced at two in the morning, but whisky, which was given to keep up their spirits, made them begin their outrage the evening before at nine. They were opposed by seventeen yeomen, and these brave rebels, who were ready to sacrifice their lives for their liberty, after four rounds of firing, all ran away from this small body!*

"The Lord-Lieutenant is abused by every loyal person. People who slept in the Castle on the night of the rising say it must have been lost if the rebels had come."

* See Annual Register, 1803; and Maxwell's "History of the Irish Rebellion," which gives an interesting account of Emmett's conspiracy, p. 410.

Another incident of his stay at Donnybrook is thus mentioned. "A companion of mine, not knowing it was loaded, presented a pistol at me and pulled the trigger. It had often missed fire before, and did so then: immediately afterwards I pulled the trigger; it went off, and sent the ball into the wall."

After remaining a year at Donnybrook, he paid another visit to Earlham. "We are most completely happy here," he writes to his mother; "every thing goes on well, and you need not fear that I am losing my time, for being with the Gurneys makes me ten times more industrious than any thing else would."

In October, 1803, he returned to Dublin, and entered Trinity College as a fellow commoner. At that time there were four examinations annually in the Dublin University—making in all fourteen during the college course of the fellow commoners. At each of these a Premium was given to the successful candidate in every division or class, if he had not already received one in the same year, in which case a certificate, which was equal to it in honour, was given instead.

At the end of the college course a gold medal was also presented to those who, at each examination, had distinguished themselves in every subject (one failure being allowed).

Mr. Buxton at once commenced his studies with great vigour, and in his first examination obtained the second place. This success appears to have surpassed his expectations, and he thus writes to his sister:—Feb. 24. 1804. "I suppose you know how the examinations have ended—very much indeed to my satisfaction, and I am now reading away for the next. My mother is in ecstasies about my being so near getting the premium." And in a letter to his mother he tells her, he is reso-

lutely bent on getting it next time. He succeeded, and this being his first triumph, he was not a little elated; and he mentions as "an exceeding addition to the pleasure" that he was the first Englishman, as far as he could ascertain, who had gained a premium at the Dublin University.

Before the autumnal examination, he writes to Mr. J. J. Gurney, who was then reading with a private tutor at Oxford: —

"College, Dublin, Sept. 9. 1804.

"Your suppositions about my getting a certificate are, I am afraid, very unlikely to be realised. My antagonists are very tremendous. In the first place, there are North and Montgomery. I hardly know which of them I ought to dread the most; they are both excellent scholars, and men of the most unwearied application: next Wybrants and Arthur, both of whom I have had the pleasure of beating already. So far for college business; I only wish you were hear to beat everybody."

In a postscript to this very letter he mentions with boyish glee his having gained the certificate in question. A close friendship soon afterwards sprang up between Mr. Buxton and Mr. John Henry North, one of the "tremendous antagonists" to whom he refers; and who afterwards distinguished himself both at the Irish Bar, and in the House of Commons.

Their course at College was nearly parallel, and as they did not on this or any succeeding occasion happen to be placed in the same division, they were never brought into competition. This friendship, maintained during Mr. North's life, was one of the circumstances to which, in recollections of his college days, Mr. Buxton always recurred with the most lively pleasure. His mention of his friend at this early age is interesting: —

"His temper is cheerful, his taste remarkably elegant, and adapted to receive pleasure from the beauties of nature. His

manners so captivating that you must be pleased by them; and his heart so good that you must love him."

Whenever Mr. Buxton could escape from Dublin, he visited Earlham; and an attachment, which he dated from the first day they met, gradually ripened between him and Hannah, fifth daughter of Mr. Gurney; till in March, 1805, they were engaged to be married.

But while in this direction a bright prospect opened before him, in another the clouds appeared to be gathering about his path. Other claimants* had come forward to contest his right to the Irish property; his mother had undertaken an expensive lawsuit regarding it, and her hopes of success were already growing dim. At the same time the family property had been materially diminished by some unsuccessful speculations in which she had engaged.

Her son's letters, however, (addressed for the most part to Earlham), bear little trace of anxiety:—

"April, 1805.

"The examinations are over, but alas! I cannot describe the disasters that have befallen me. Think how disagreeable a circumstance it must be to me to have all my hopes disappointed, to lose the certificate, to have my gold medal stopped, and, what is worse, to know that my Earlham visit, as it was the cause of my idleness, was the cause of my disgrace. Think of all this, and fetch a *very, very* deep sigh,—and look very grave, and then think how happy I must be to have to tell YOU, that my utmost examinationary hopes are realised,—that I have the certificate and 'Valde bene in omnibus,' and, what is better, that I can ascribe my success *to nothing but my Earlham visit!* . . . . . I am sure that, if I had not thought that I was partly working for you, I never should have been able to read so much during this month. The examiner told five of my opponents that he was sorry he had not a premium for each of them. I was not 'cut up' (as the college phrase is) during the whole examination;

* Of the Yorke family.

and if I have been the trumpeter of my own praise a little too much, you must remember that one slight word of approbation from Earlham would be more grateful to me, than the loudest applause of the whole world besides."

He mentions in a letter, dated May 15. 1805, that he had been spending the preceding fortnight "chiefly in reading English poetry;" and he adds,—

"I went yesterday, for the first time, to a schoolmaster who gives lectures on reading. I have long felt my deficiency in that most useful qualification, especially when I was last at Earlham; and I then made a firm resolution to conquer it. However, it was with difficulty I could keep my determination, for my companions have entertained themselves very much at the idea of my going to school to learn to read. But I expect to gain two very material advantages by this plan; the first is, that perhaps it may afford you pleasure, and secondly, that, as I go immediately after dinner, it will furnish an opportunity for avoiding, without openly quarrelling with, a party of collegians, into whose society I have lately got, and whose habits of drinking make me determine to retreat from them."

"College, Dublin, Sept. 29. 1805.

"My mind has lately been very much occupied with the consideration of the lawfulness of taking oaths, because my College pursuits would lose a great deal of their stimulus if I thought I should not go to the Bar, for the information which I may acquire here would be comparatively of little use to any but a lawyer. To remove or strengthen my doubts I have been reading 'Paley's Philosophy,' and, indeed, he has almost convinced me that taking oaths is not the kind of swearing that is prohibited. I have endeavoured to free my mind from prejudice on one side, and interest on the other; and I think that if I felt a bias at all, it was against swearing, which arose from the fear of being actuated by my wishes, rather than by reason."

In October, 1805, he and his friend North took their seats together in the Historical Society.* In one of his

* This was an association established by the students of the University, with a view of promoting the practice of elocution and the study of history, and was an object of great interest among them. Debates were held

letters he speaks of the dread with which he looked forward to "such a tremendous thing" as addressing so large an audience. His first speech, however, met with unexpected success. One of his fellow collegians still remembers "its producing quite a sensation among the under-graduates," and he himself thus writes to Earlham: —

"November, 1805.

"I did not answer your letter before, because I wished to state the result of my speech, which is beyond my utmost expectations. Five persons spoke besides myself: ninety-two members gave Returns, of which eighty-five were for me. A law exists in the Society, that if any one should get eighty Returns for a speech, he is to receive the '*remarkable thanks.*' There has never been an opportunity of putting this law in force till now."

"Wednesday, Dec. 25. 1805.

"I made a speech last night in the Historical Society, and, contrary to my former determination, I intend to speak once more. I am induced to do this by getting a great many more Returns than I had any reason to expect.

"I have, I fear, very little chance of getting the premium; however, if I do not, I am perfectly satisfied with the result of my studies this term. I have taken very little sleep, amusement, or exercise lately, the consequence of which is that I have been very unwell."

His hopes were more than realised; not only did he again carry off the premium, but the silver medal of the Historical Society was awarded him, of which he subsequently gained the other three prizes. At College, indeed, nothing but good fortune attended him. His

every week during the last term of the year. After each debate, every member present named the one who in his opinion had spoken most effectively, and at the end of the year the under-graduate who had gained the largest number of suffrages received a silver medal. Another medal was the prize at the annual examination in history. No one was admitted into the society until the end of his second year of residence at the University; and, consequently, two medals for eloquence, and two for history, were the largest number that any one could obtain.

exertions were uniformly crowned with success; his mind found scope for its unceasing activity; his circle of friends was choice, yet large; and a zest was added to all enjoyments, by the bright prospect afforded him at Earlham. The gradual overcasting of his hopes of wealth but little affected his spirits. He says in a letter to a friend:—

"I am very sorry to hear of your unhappinesses; I wish I could do any thing to alleviate them. I think I might very well spare happiness enough for a moderate person, and still have enough left for myself."

He some years after referred to his success in college as having "produced this amount of self-confidence."

"I was, and have always been, conscious that though others had great talents, mine were moderate; that what I wanted in ability I must make up by perseverance; in short, that I must work hard to win, but withal a sense that by working hard I could win. This conviction that I could do nothing without labour, but that I could do anything, or almost anything which others did, by dint of vigorous application; this, coupled with a resolved mind, a kind of plodding, dogged determination, over which difficulties had little influence, and with considerable industry and perseverance; these have been the talents committed to my trust."

From the dissipation then too prevalent in the University he was happily preserved, partly by his close and incessant occupation, partly by his Earlham connection, and partly by his previous education; for although his letters up to this period contain no direct mention of religion, yet the Christian principles which his mother had instilled into his mind retained a certain influence; while his natural firmness of character enabled him to disregard the taunts to which he was exposed. He found more difficulty in sacrificing to his academical pursuits the strong inclination for

field sports, which had been cherished at Earl's Colne, and which accompanied him through life. In a letter to Earlham, dated May, 1806, he says, —

"One of the various advantages I have derived from our connexion is the check it has been to my sporting inclinations. I am thoroughly convinced that, had my mind received another bent, had my pursuits been directed towards sporting, its charms would have been irresistible. A life dedicated to amusement must be most unsatisfactory. . . . . I think you need be under no apprehension in regard to —— having too much influence over me: as to my being member for Weymouth, it is a totally chimerical idea, for were I ever so willing, it is quite impracticable, so you may lay aside all fears of my becoming a *great man.*"

His letters to his mother at this period are chiefly confined to matters of business; one trait in them is, however, too characteristic to be passed over without notice. Nearly all of them conclude with inquiries and directions about his horses, in which he always took so lively an interest, that it almost might be called *personal friendship.* "I mean," he tells his mother, "to visit Weymouth before returning to Ireland, to see how my horses and relations do." He was, however, obliged to hasten his return to Dublin, and on his way thither he had a remarkable escape, the particulars of which he thus describes: —

"In the year 1806, I was travelling with the Earlham party in Scotland. I left them to return to the College of Dublin. In consequence of some conversation about the Parkgate vessels, with my present wife, then Hannah Gurney, she extracted from me a promise that I would never go by Parkgate. I was exceedingly impatient to be at Dublin, in order to prepare for my examination: when I reached Chester, the captain of the Parkgate packet came to me, and invited me to go with him. The wind was fair; the vessel was to sail in a few hours; he was sure I should be in Dublin early the next morning, whereas a place

in the Holyhead mail was doubtful, and at best I must lose the next day by travelling through Wales. My promise was a bitter mortification to me, but I could not dispense with it. I drank tea, and played at cards with a very large party. About eight or nine o'clock they all went away, on board the vessel, and of the 119 persons who embarked as passengers, 118 were drowned before midnight."*

The account in the newspapers of the loss of the Parkgate packet, was seen by his late travelling companions, on their way into Norfolk ; and it was not till after a day of anxious suspense that they heard of his safe arrival in Ireland. At Lynn they received the following letter from him :—

"Have you heard of the dreadful accident which happened to the Parkgate packet? You will see by the newspaper the particulars. I have been talking to-day with the only passenger who was saved; he says that there were 119 in the vessel, and mentioned many most melancholy circumstances. Had I gone by Parkgate, which I probably might have done as we were detained some time at Chester, and expected to be detained longer, I should have been in the vessel, but I declared positively that I would not go. Can you guess my reason for being so obstinate?"

It was during this tour in Scotland that his attention appears to have been drawn, with increased earnestness, to the subject of religion. When at Perth, he purchased a large Bible, with the resolution, which he steadfastly kept, of perusing a portion of it every day; and he mentions in a letter, dated September 10. 1806, that quite a change had been worked in his mind with respect to reading the Holy Scriptures. "Formerly," he says, "I read generally rather as a duty than as a pleasure, but now I read them with great interest, and, I may say, happiness."

* See "Gentleman's Magazine," September, 1806.

"I am sure," he writes again, "that some of the happiest hours that I spend here are while I am reading our Bible, which is as great a favourite as a book can be. I never before felt so assured that the only means of being happy, is from seeking the assistance of a superior Being, or so inclined to endeavour to submit myself to the direction of principle."

The college examination was now again approaching, and he was not so well prepared as usual, having given, as he feared, too much time to Optics, of which science he speaks as "the most delightful and captivating of studies." He writes to the party at Earlham,—

"I do not, however, feel discouraged, but in a most happy, quiet mind; more determined to work, than anxious about the result; desirous of success for your sakes, and able to bear defeat alleviated by your sympathy; but, if reading can avail, I *will* be prepared."

After the examination was over, he says,—

"I never had such a contest. The examiner could not decide in the Hall, so we were obliged to have two hours more this morning; however, I can congratulate you once more. . . . I venerate Optics for what they have done for me in this examination."

In the course of this examination, he gave an answer to one of the *vivâ voce* questions, which the Examiner thought incorrect, and he passed on to the next man; but to the astonishment of the other under-graduates, Buxton rose from his seat and said, "I beg your pardon, sir, but I am convinced my answer was correct." The Examiner, after some demur, consented to refer to a book of authority on the subject, and it proved that Buxton's answer was the one given in the latest edition of the work

"Nov. 1806.

"I was strongly pressed to play at billiards yesterday, which of course I refused*, and was successful enough to persuade the person to employ his evening in another way. He is a strong instance of their injurious effects. He told me that when he was in town he went regularly three times a day to a billiard table, and that playing at 4*d.* a game, on an average, cost him 10*s.* a day. It is the most alluring, and therefore the most destructive, game that ever was invented. I have heard it remarked, and have indeed remarked it myself, that if any collegian commences billiard playing, he ceases to do anything else. . . . I have been employed all this morning in reading history. I find that this study is useful, not only in itself, but also in giving a habit of reading everything with accuracy. . . . Every day brings us new accounts of disturbances in the remote parts of the country; I am almost inclined to fear there will be a rebellion. I have been thinking a great deal lately of what I should do in case the corps were again established in college. There is to me no question so dubious or perplexing, as whether resistance against danger from an enemy is allowable: however, if I can trust my own determination, I shall not be at all swayed by the example of others, or by the disgrace which would attend a refusal to enlist."

A day or two later, he continues:

"I was extremely tired at the Historical Society on Wednesday night. I was made president, and you cannot imagine the labour of keeping a hundred unruly and violent men orderly and obedient. The all-engrossing subject here at present is the prospect of a rebellion, if I may say the *prospect* when I think there is the reality. Every day we hear of fresh murders; and the Bishop of Elphin, who is of the Law family, declared openly in the Castle-yard, that in the five-and-twenty years he had resided here, the people in his diocese were never in so desperate a state of rebellion."

* He had given a promise at Earlham not to play at billiards while at college. His scruples respecting oaths and the use of arms were derived from his intercourse with so many members of the Society of Friends.

On his return to England for a short holiday, he says, —

"London, Jan. 23. 1807.

"It is a very great pleasure to me that I can tell you some news, which I think will delight you. In the first place, I have arrived here safe and sound. In the second I have for the twelfth time secured the premium, and 'valde bene in omnibus.'"

On the 14th of April in the same year he received his thirteenth premium, and also the highest honour of the University — the Gold Medal. With these distinctions, and the four silver medals from the Historical Society, he prepared to return to England. At this juncture a circumstance occurred which might have turned the whole current of his life. A proposal was made to him by the electors to come forward as candidate for the representation of the University, and good grounds were given him to expect a triumphant return. No higher token of esteem than this could have been offered to one without wealth or Irish connexion, and without the smallest claim upon the consideration of the University, except what his personal and academical character afforded. Such an offer it was not easy to reject, and he was, as he says at the time, "extremely agitated and pleased by it." He weighed the pleasure, the distinction, the influence promised by the political career thus unexpectedly opened before him; and he set against these considerations the duties which his approaching marriage would bring upon him. Prudence prevailed, and he declined the proposal. His friend Mr. North writes to him: —

"I think all hearts would have been in your favour, if you had made your appearance — and still they cannot convince themselves that you intend to go boldly through with your

resolution — 'Come then, my guide, my genius, come along.' You were mistaken in thinking fortune (in one sense) a necessary qualification; there is an honourable exception for the Universities."

Mr. Buxton, however, had come to a deliberate decision, and it was not to be shaken. He reached England at the end of April, and in the following month his marriage took place.

In one of his papers he thus alludes to the closing circumstances of his academical career:—

"On May 13. 1807, I obtained the object of my long attachment — having refused, in consequence of the prospect of this marriage, a most honourable token of the esteem of the University of Dublin. The prospect was indeed flattering to youthful ambition — to become a member of Parliament, and my constituents men of thought and education, and honour and principle—my companions, my competitors — those who had known me and observed me for years.

"I feel now a pride in recollecting that it was from these men I received this mark of approbation — from men with whom I had no family alliance, not even the natural connexion of compatriotism, and without high birth or splendid fortune or numerous connexions to recommend me. I suspended my determination for one day, beset by my friends, who were astonished at the appearance of a doubt, and, having closely considered all points, I determined to decline the intended honour; and from that day to this, thanks to God, I have never lamented the determination."

CHAPTER III.

1807—1812.

ENTERS TRUMAN'S BREWERY. — OCCUPATIONS IN LONDON. — LETTER FROM MR. TWISS.—CORRESPONDENCE.—DEATH OF EDWARD BUXTON. — EXERTIONS IN THE BREWERY.

THE first few months of Mr. Buxton's married life were passed at a small cottage close to his grandmother's seat at Bellfield, and in the neighbourhood of his mother, who had contracted a second marriage with Mr. Edmund Henning, and had left Essex to reside at Weymouth.

His expectations of wealth had been disappointed, and he found that his fortunes must depend upon his own exertions. After deliberate consideration, he relinquished the idea of following the profession of the law, and entered into negotiations in different quarters, with a view to establishing himself in business. For a while these were unsuccessful, and during this time he suffered severely from the pain of present inaction, and the obscurity that rested on the future. In after life when referring to this period, he said, "I longed for any employment that would produce me a hundred a year, if I had to work twelve hours a day for it." Nearly a year passed away before his anxieties were brought to a conclusion. The winter was spent at Earlham, where his first child was born. Soon afterwards, in a letter to his wife from London, he says, "I slept at Brick Lane; my uncles Sampson and Osgood Hanbury were there, and revived my old feelings of good nephewship, they treated me so kindly. This morning I met Mr. Randall and your father. I think that I shall become a Blackwell Hall factor.

This intention was prevented by an unexpected turn in his fortunes, resulting from his friendly interview with his uncles. Within a few days Mr. Sampson Hanbury, of Truman's Brewery in Spitalfields, offered him a situation in that establishment, with a prospect of becoming a partner after three years' probation. He joyfully acceded to the proposal, and entered with great ardour upon his new sphere of action. He writes, July, 1808, to his mother, "I was up this morning at four, and do not expect to finish my day's work before twelve to-night—my excuse for silence. I have not neglected your business." At the close of the year he succeeded Mr. Hanbury in the occupation of a house connected with the brewery, in which he continued to reside for several years.

During these years his correspondence was not extensive. Among the few letters which have been preserved is the following, addressed to his wife, who had accompanied one of her brothers to the Isle of Wight. Mr. Buxton had arranged to join them there; but on arriving at Southampton, he found that all communication with the island was interdicted on account of the secret expedition then about to sail from Cowes, as it afterwards proved, to Walcheren.

"Southampton, June 15. 1809.

"Now that I have finished my coffee, I think I cannot employ my time more profitably or more pleasantly than in sending a few lines to you. I am afraid the embargo has been a great trouble to you. It was so to me when I first arrived, as the idea of spending some time with your party was particularly pleasant: however, either by the aid of 'divine philosophy,' or, from finding that the misfortune was irremediable, in a short time I was reconciled to my fate, and began to consider how best to enjoy what was within my reach. As I could not have the living companions that I most wished for, I went to a book-

seller's shop to endeavour to find some agreeable dead ones, and having made choice of 'Tristram Shandy' and a 'Patriot King,' I proceeded in their honourable company to the water side, took a boat, and went off to Netley Abbey. I thoroughly enjoyed this excursion. First I went all over the interior, and then walked leisurely round it at some distance, stopping and reading at every scene that I particularly liked. Then I went up into the wood, to a spot which seems to have been formed for a dining room. While the boatman was at dinner, I went over into the next field to a higher ground. I hope this did not escape you. The four ivy-covered broken towers just below, a party dining on the grass-plat, the intermediate distance of trees, and the sea behind, made it, I think, the finest view I ever saw. I only hope you have sketched it; and next to it, I should wish for a drawing of the nearest window from the inside — I mean the one that is tolerably perfect, with a great deal of ivy over the middle pillar. I had a pleasant row home, and have since been thinking about your party with the greatest pleasure; and, amongst other thoughts connected with you, it has forcibly struck me how beneficial it is sometimes to be amongst strangers, it gives such a taste and a relish for the society of those one loves."

To Mrs. Henning.

"My dear Mother, "Dec. 3. 1809.

"I am very much obliged to you for your letter, which furnished me with several useful hints, though not upon the particular subject on which I wanted information.

"As to the general propriety and duty of introducing Christianity into India, there cannot be, I imagine, a question; but is this the proper season? is not our empire in India too unstable to authorize such an experiment? In short I wished to determine its political propriety, to examine it with the eye of a statesman, not of a Christian, and to inquire, not what Fenelon, but what Machiavel, would have said of it. The result which I have come to is, that it would be *highly expedient*, and perhaps the only measure which could reinstate our declining power in the East.

"Your letter shows powers of which I may make eminent use, but observe, I must qualify this praise by saying that it

wanted method throughout the whole, and greater pains bestowed upon the parts.

"The Poor Laws is the next question I shall consider, and I expect great assistance from you. The only restrictions that I would suggest are a parsimoniousness of Scripture quotations, and a care against negligence in the dress of the parts, for, after all, appearance and style are more than matter; a diamond is but a dirty pebble till it is polished. Virgil and his translator Trap only differed as to dress. The images, the incidents, the characters are the same in both, yet the one is the best poem in the Latin language, and the other perhaps the worst in the English."

To Mrs. Buxton.

"July 14. 1811.

"I hope to take a long walk with——, whose company is a great treat to me. I agree with you that he is a striking instance of the superiority of a domestic religious education. To be sure, to please my fancy, I should like a more *robustious* son; but I should be most happy to insure to my boy ——'s principle, and I would willingly resign all those sterner and more manly qualities which from inclination I am apt to wish."

Although, during his term of probation at the brewery, he was closely occupied in making himself master of his new vocation, he yet found time for the study of English literature, and especially of political economy. "My maxims are," he writes, "never to begin a book without finishing it; never to consider it finished till I know it; and to study with a whole mind." He admitted, in after-life, that even at this early period he had indulged a distant idea of entering Parliament; and in consequence of this he continued to practise the art of public speaking in a debating club of which he was a member.

"I must tell you," he writes to Mr. North, December 1810, "of a signal reformation which has taken place. I have become again a hard reader, and of sterling books. In spite of your marriage cause, I hold myself your equal in Blackstone and in Montesquieu, and your superior in Bacon, parts of whom I have

read with Mallettian avidity. I have not been much at 'The Academics,' but it goes on famously; your memory is held in the highest estimation — even our oracle Twiss speaks well of you. Grant and Bowdler are, I fear, gone from us."

His former schoolfellow, Mr. Horace Twiss, thus describes meeting him at this time: —

"We had been at school together at the celebrated Dr. Burney's, of Greenwich, and were very intimate.

"Buxton was then, as in after-life, extraordinarily tall, and was called by his playfellows 'Elephant Buxton.' He was at that time, as afterwards, like the animal he was called from, of a kind and gentle nature; but he did not then exhibit any symptoms of the elephantine talent he afterwards evinced.

"I myself very often did his Latin lessons for him; and, as he was somewhat older and much bigger than I was, I found him, in many respects, a valuable ally. When I was about twenty, I became a member of 'The Academics,' a society in London (like the 'Historical' in Dublin, and the 'Speculative' in Edinburgh), where the topics of the day were debated. There I heard, on my first or second evening of attendance, a speech of great ability from a man of great stature; and I should have been assured it was my old schoolfellow I saw before me, but that I could not suppose it possible so dull a boy could have become so clever a man. He it was, however; and I renewed my friendly intercourse with him, both at the society and in private.

"Our *chums* were poor North, afterwards distinguished in Parliament and at the Irish bar, who died at between forty and fifty; and Henry, the younger son of the great Grattan. We afterwards sat altogether in the House of Commons, with some others of our fellow-academics, the two Grants and Spring Rice. Horner had been an academic, but he was before our time. Of late years, Buxton was chiefly resident in Norfolk, but our mutual goodwill continued to the last."

From childhood the duty of active benevolence had been impressed on him by his mother, who used to set before him the idea of taking up some great cause by

which he might promote the happiness of man. On beginning to live in London he at once sought opportunities of usefulness, and in this pursuit he received great assistance from an acquaintance, which ripened into friendship, with the Quaker philosopher and philanthropist, William Allen. This good man had long been engaged upon objects of enlightened benevolence, and by him Mr. Buxton was from time to time initiated into some of those questions to which his after-life was devoted.

One of the most important of these had already dawned upon him. He writes to Mrs. Buxton, Dec. 1808:—

"I have one reason for wishing to remain in town, which is, that I am going to become a member of a small society, now instituting, for the purpose of calling the public mind to the bad effects and inefficiency of capital punishments."

And at a subsequent period he says—

"From the time of my connexion with the Brewery in 1808 to 1816, I took a part in all the charitable objects of that distressed district, more especially those connected with education, the Bible Society, and the deep sufferings of the weavers."

All these labours he shared with his brother-in-law, Mr. Samuel Hoare, of Hampstead, between whom and himself there existed then, and through life, a friendship and close fellowship, far beyond what usually results from such a connexion. With them was also linked his own brother Charles, who was resident in London, and was the favourite companion of both.

Although Mr. Buxton was a member of the Established Church, circumstances had cherished in him a strong attachment to the Society of Friends, and to their silent mode of worship. He frequently spent the Sunday under the roof of Mr. and Mrs. Fry, at Plashet, in Essex; and even when at home, from the time of his marriage up to

the year 1811, he generally attended a Friends' Meeting. In a letter written on Sunday, Oct. 22nd, 1809, he mentions that he had been reading the fifth chapter of St. Matthew, "as a subject for reflection at Meeting," and adds,—

"I think I almost always have a good meeting when I read before it, without any intermediate occupation of mind. It was a great pleasure to me to be able to engage myself so thoroughly when there, as I had begun to think that I was rather going back in that respect. The verse that principally led me on to a train of thought was that 'Except your righteousness exceed the righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven.' This text is always very striking to me. It is so serious a thing to be only on a par with the generality of those you see around you. This evening I have been thinking what I can do for the poor this winter. I feel that I have as yet done far short of what I ought and what I wish to do."

To Mrs. Buxton.

"Sept. 23. 1810.

"I have passed a very quiet and industrious week, up early, breakfast at eight o'clock, dinner near six, and the evenings to myself, which have been well employed over my favourite Blackstone. I read him till near ten last night, and then Jeremy Taylor till past eleven, and could hardly give him up, he was so very entertaining a companion. * * * This morning I went to Gracechurch Street meeting. I was rather late, which made me feel hurried, and prevented my having sufficient time to myself before meeting; however, I had made a little use of my friend Jeremy at breakfast, and this and last night's readings gave me occupation for my thoughts. I saw William Allen, who wants me to call upon him to-morrow, as he says he has found a place for the boys' school as suitable as if we were to build one. This, I know, will please you, but will alarm you also, lest we should forget the girls.

"And now you will expect to hear something about my return. I must tell you that you cannot be in a greater hurry for me to come to Earlham than I am to get there; for I do not

think I have lately enjoyed anything so much as the time I spent there, and I hold it to be quite a treasure and a blessing to have such brothers and sisters; I hope and believe, too, that it may be as useful as it is agreeable. Still I do not feel altogether confident that the stimulus which they have given me will be of any duration; for it is not inducements to do our duty that we want—these we have already in abundance. They are, indeed, so many and so various, that if we were only as prudent and as rational with regard to our future, as we are to our present, none would utterly want religion but those who utterly wanted sense."

It has been mentioned that Mr. Buxton was the eldest of three sons. Edward North, the third brother, a wayward lad, had been sent to sea as a midshipman in an East Indiaman, commanded by his relative Captain Dumbleton; but in his first voyage he left his ship and entered the king's service. From that time his family had received no tidings of him, and by degrees they became impressed with the painful conviction that he had died at sea. The suspense of five years was at last brought to an end by the arrival of a letter to Mr. Buxton from one of his brother shipmates, announcing that he had arrived, in a dying state, at Gosport, and was earnestly desirous to see some of his relations. He had been attacked by dysentery while on board ship at Bombay; and, feeling that his days were numbered, he became intensely anxious to reach home once more. He hastened to England in the first ship by which he could obtain a passage; and, on his arrival at Gosport, was carried to Haslar Hospital, whence he despatched a letter to his mother. This letter was unfortunately delayed, in consequence of its having been directed to the house at Earl's Colne, which had been parted with some years before, and the unhappy youth—he was only nineteen—in the morbid state of his feelings, became so strongly

impressed by a sense of his neglect in never having communicated with his friends, that he felt persuaded they would now refuse to acknowledge him. A second letter, in which he besought that some one of the family would consent to visit him on his death-bed, reached Mr. Buxton; and in two hours he and his brother Charles were on the road to Gosport, which they reached on the following morning. With mingled emotions of hope and fear they set out for the hospital. Having been directed to a large ward full of the sick and dying, they walked through the room without being able to discover the object of their search; till at length they were struck by the earnestness with which an emaciated youth upon one of the sick-beds was gazing at them. On their approaching his bedside, although he could scarcely articulate a word, his face was lit up with an expression of delight that sufficiently showed that he recognised them: but it was not for some moments that they could trace in his haggard features the lineaments of their long-lost brother.

A few days afterwards Mr. Buxton writes—

"Gosport, August 10. 1811.

"It is pleasant to be with Edward, he seems so happy in the idea of having his friends about him. This morning I thought him strong enough to hear part of a chapter in St. Luke, on prayer, and the 20th Psalm. Charles then went away, and I mentioned to him how applicable some of the passages were to his state; he said he felt them so, and that he had been very unfortunate in having been on board ship where religion is so neglected; that he had procured a Bible, and one of his friends had sometimes read to him, but not so often as he wished. That he had hoped and prayed that he might reach England, more that he might confess his sins to me than for any other reason; that, supposing at length that there was next to no chance of this, he had dictated a letter to me upon the subject, which is now in his box. When I told him that, as his illness had brought him into such a frame of mind, it was impossible

for me to regret it, let the event be what it would, he said he considered it as a mercy now, but that nobody could tell what his sufferings had been. I then entered into a kind of short history of what I considered to be inculcated in the Testament, 'that Christ came to call sinners to repentance.' He felt consolation from this; but again said that he had been indeed a sinner. I then told him that I hoped he did not ever omit to pray for assistance, and I added that Charles and I had joined in prayer for him last night. He seemed so much affected by this that I did not think it right to press the conversation farther. Does not all this furnish a striking proof how our sorrows may be converted into joys? I can look upon his illness in no other light than as a most merciful dispensation. It is most affectingly delightful to see his lowliness of mind, and his gratitude to all of us. I cannot help thinking that his mind is more changed than his body."

The letter above referred to, which was found in Edward Buxton's sea chest, was as follows:—

"My dearest Brother, "H.M.S. 'Chiffonne.'

"As this is the last letter you will ever receive from me, as I am now on my death-bed, I write to you to comfort as much as you can my dearest mother and my dearest brother and sisters. As I have been sick and in misery a very long while, it will be easing me taking me from this troublesome world. I was on my passage to Europe, as only a cold climate could have cured me; but God, whose will be done, has ordained that I should not see England, though I should have died infinitely happier had I seen my dearest mother, Anna, and you, to have got your forgiveness for the irregularities I have carried on; yet I feel you forgive me; and though I have been a very great sinner for the small number of years I have lived, I die with the hope of being saved, by what I had been led to believe, and now wish I had much more followed, *through Jesus Christ.*

"Don't let the news of my death cast any of you down, as we all know it is a thing we must all come to; and as you are the eldest and support of the family, comfort the rest as much as you can, not forgetting to remember me to your dear wife. I have often thought of her kindness to me at Norwich before

your marriage. And don't forget poor Abraham Plastow and Betty; tell them I thought of them in my last.

"I can't say any more. The bearer of this, Mr. Yeates, is a truly good-hearted young man, and has been extremely kind to me while I have been sick, and while I was in the Bombay hospital. He will give you my pay and prize certificate, which you can get paid for at Somerset House; and any other information concerning me you want, as I am too weak to write more. Adieu to you all.

"EDWARD N. BUXTON."

For about a fortnight after his brothers reached him the young midshipman survived. He had the comfort, so earnestly desired, of being nursed by his mother and of seeing once more his whole family.

"When he was told by Charles that I was come," writes his eldest sister, "he clasped his hands and gave thanks, but desired not to see me till he was composed; a tear or two that appeared he wiped off with his arm. He is so reduced and altered that I should not have had the least idea that it was he: neither in his hair, eyes, nor voice can you trace a resemblance. He looks the skeleton of a fine young man, handsomer than Edward was, as tall as his brothers, and of a dark complexion. He has had much satisfactory conversation with Fowell, lamenting that he had not followed his advice, and expressing that he had been enabled to pray much in coming over. Fowell read to him in the Bible yesterday. He was much affected, but comforted by it, saying he did not deserve to be so attended by his friends; and to-day he said to my mother that it was a sign to him that he was partly forgiven, that his prayers were heard to see his friends again, and obtain their forgiveness. His mind is remarkably clear; indeed Fowell seemed not to know before how strong it was, or what serious feelings he had."

Edward North Buxton died at Haslar Hospital on the 25th of August, 1811. His last words were addressed to his mother, saying that he was prepared for death; that the prospect of it did not appear now to him what it had done formerly; adding, with a remarkable ex-

pression of countenance, that "he hoped God would soon be so very kind as to take him."

His sister Sarah, in describing the solemn, and yet peaceful, meeting round the death-bed of the returned wanderer, thus mentions her eldest brother:—"Fowell, the head of our family, is a strong support; and when religious consolation was so much wanted, he seemed most ready to afford it. The power of his influence we deeply felt: it was by far the most striking feature in the past remarkable month."

In 1811 Mr. Buxton was admitted as a partner in the brewery; and during the ensuing seven years he was almost exclusively devoted to his business. Soon after his admission, his senior partners, struck by his energy and force of mind, placed in his hands the difficult and responsible task of remodelling their whole system of management. It would be superfluous to enter into the details of his proceedings, though, perhaps, he never displayed greater vigour and firmness than in carrying through this undertaking. For two or three years he was occupied from morning till night in prosecuting, step by step, his plans of reform: a single example may indicate with what spirit he grappled with the difficulties that beset him on all sides.

One of the principal clerks was an honest man, and a valuable servant; but he was wedded to the old system, and viewed with great antipathy the young partner's proposed innovations. At length, on one occasion, he went so far as to thwart Mr. Buxton's plans. The latter took no notice of this at the time, except desiring him to attend in the counting-house at 6 o'clock the next morning. Mr. Buxton met him there at the appointed hour; and, without any expostulation, or a single angry word, desired him to produce his books, as he meant for

the future to undertake the charge of them himself, in addition to his other duties. Amazed at this unexpected decision, the clerk yielded entirely; he promised complete submission for the future; he made his wife intercede for him; and Mr. Buxton, who valued his character and services, was induced to restore him to his place. They afterwards became very good friends, and the salutary effect of the changes introduced by Mr. Buxton was at length admitted by his leading opponent; nor, except in one instance, did he ever contend against them again. On that occasion Mr. Buxton merely sent him a message "that he had better meet him in the counting-house at 6 o'clock the next morning,"—and the book-keeper's opposition was heard of no more.

We may add, that, among other points wanting reform, he found that the men employed were in many instances wholly uneducated. To the remedy of this evil he took a more direct road than exhortation or advice. He called them together, and simply said to them, "This day six weeks I shall discharge every man who cannot read and write." He provided them a schoolmaster and means of learning, and on the appointed day held an examination. Such had been the earnestness to learn that not one man was dismissed.

He was also very careful to prevent any work from being done in the brewery on the Sunday, and the strict observance of it which he introduced has been thoroughly maintained up to the present time.

The success which crowned Mr. Buxton's exertions in business materially paved his way to public life. He was gradually relieved from the necessity of attending in person to the details of its management, although he continued throughout his life to take a part in the general superintendence of the concern.

CHAPTER IV.

1812—1816.

FIRST SPEECH IN PUBLIC. — THE REV. JOSIAH PRATT. — INCREASING REGARD TO RELIGION. — DANGEROUS ILLNESS. — ITS EFFECT ON HIS MIND. — REMOVES TO HAMPSTEAD. — DISAPPOINTMENTS AND ANXIETIES. — REFLECTIONS. — NARROW ESCAPE. — LETTER TO MR. J. J. GURNEY.

MR. BUXTON was, of course, closely bound to his London avocations; but almost every autumn he spent some weeks at Earlham, enjoying the recreation of shooting, in company with Mr. Samuel Hoare. It was during one of these visits that he first addressed a public meeting. His brother-in-law, Mr. Joseph John Gurney, in September, 1812, insisted that for once he should leave his sport, and give his aid in the second meeting of the Norwich Auxiliary Bible Society, at which Mr. Coke and other country gentlemen were present.

His speech on that occasion is thus alluded to by Mr. J. J. Gurney*: —

"There are many who can still remember the remarkable effect produced, in one of the earliest public meetings of the Norfolk and Norwich Auxiliary Bible Society, more than thirty years ago, by one of his speeches, distinguished for its acuteness and good sense, as well as for the Christian temper in which it was delivered. His commanding person†, his benevolent and highly intellectual expression of countenance, his full-toned voice, together with his manly yet playful eloquence, electrified the assembly, and many were those on that day who rejoiced that so noble and just a cause had obtained so strenuous and able an advocate."

* "Brief Memoir." Fletcher, 1845.

† Mr. Buxton was upwards of six feet four inches in height; but his powerful frame and broad chest rendered his height less apparent.

Some indications have been already given of the increasing power of religious principle in Mr. Buxton's mind; but he had not yet been fully brought under its influence, nor had he acquired clear views as to some of the fundamental truths of Christianity. In 1811 he mentions that during a visit to Lynn he had met his friends the Rev. Edward Edwards and the Rev. Robert Hankinson, who recommended him to attend the ministry of the Rev. Josiah Pratt, in Wheeler Street Chapel, Spitalfields; and to the preaching of that excellent clergyman he attributed, with the liveliest gratitude, his first real acquaintance with the doctrines of Christianity. He himself says — "It was much and of vast moment that I there learned from Mr. Pratt."—He wrote to Mr. Pratt thirty years afterwards, "Whatever I have done in my life for Africa, the seeds of it were sown in my heart in Wheeler Street Chapel." And when asked what had first interested him about Suttees, he replied "Mr. Pratt's preaching. Mr. Pratt used to mention them in his sermons, and ever after they rested on my heart."

With him, indeed, there was no sudden change, as in many men of well-known piety. Both nature and education had tended to prepare him for religion. His mind, ever disposed (in Bacon's words) to "prefer things of substance before things of show"—with a strong love for truth, and susceptible of deep feeling—afforded, perhaps, a fit soil for the reception of those truths, which at length struck deep root there. On the other hand, he regarded his tendency to become wholly absorbed in the work before him as a great bar to his progress in higher things. Thus he writes to one of his relatives at Earlham: —

"Hampstead, March 21. 1812.

"I had determined, before I received your last letter, to thank you, dear C——, myself, for much pleasure, and I think

a little profit (much less than it ought to have been), in observing the progress of your mind. It does indeed give me real joy to see you and others of your family striving in your race with such full purpose of heart; and the further I feel left behind—the more I feel engaged in other pursuits—so much the more I admire and love the excellence which I hardly endeavour to reach, and so much the more I perceive the infinite superiority of your objects over mine.

"When I contrast your pursuits with my pursuits, and your life with my life, I always feel the comparison a wholesome and a humiliating lesson, and it makes me see the ends for which I labour in their proper light; and my heart is ready to confess, that 'Thou hast chosen the good part, which shall not be taken from thee.' How is it, then, with this contrast constantly staring me in the face whenever I think seriously, that it has no effect, or next to none, on my practice? I see the excellence of the walk you have chosen, and the madness of dedicating myself to any thing but to the preparation of that journey which I must so shortly take. I know that if success shall crown all my projects, I shall gain that which will never satisfy me, 'that which is not bread.' I know the poverty of our most darling schemes—the meanness of our most delicious prospects—the transitoriness of our most durable possessions—when weighed against that fulness of joy and eternity of bliss which are the reward of those who seek them aright. All this I see with the utmost certainty—that two and two make four is not clearer; how is it, then, that with these speculative opinions, my practical ones are so entirely different? I am irritable about trifles, eager after pleasures, and anxious about business: various objects of this kind engross my attention at all times: they pursue me even to meeting and to church, and seem to grudge the few moments which are devoted to higher considerations, and strive to bring back to the temple of the Lord the sellers, and the buyers, and the money-changers. My reason tells me that these things are utterly indifferent; but my practice says that they only are worthy of thought, and attention. My practice says, 'Thou art increased with goods, and hast need of nothing:' but my reason teaches me, 'Thou art wretched and miserable, and poor, and, blind, and naked.'

* * * "I have in this letter divulged the train of thinking which is constantly recurring to my mind. * * * If I have said

too much in any part of it, I am sure I do not go beyond the truth in saying, that hardly any thing comes so near my heart as my love for my sweet sisters."

The period had now arrived from which may be dated that ascendancy of religion over his mind which gave shape and colouring to the whole of his after life.

In the commencement of the year 1813 he was visited by an illness which brought him to the brink of the grave. How momentous an era he felt this to have been, we may learn from the following paper, written after his recovery: —

"February 7. 1813.

"After so severe an illness as that with which I have lately been visited, it may be advantageous to record the most material circumstances attendant upon it. May my bodily weakness, and the suddenness with which it came, remind me of the uncertainty of life; and may the great and immediate mercy bestowed upon me spiritually, be a continual memorial that 'the Lord is full of compassion and long suffering,' and 'a very present help in trouble!'

"I was seized with a bilious fever in January. When I first felt myself unwell, I prayed that I might have a dangerous illness, provided that illness might bring me nearer to my God. I gradually grew worse; and when the disorder had assumed an appearance very alarming to those about me, I spent nearly an hour in most fervent prayer. I have been, for some years, perplexed with doubts; I do not know if they did not arise more from the fear of doubting than from any other cause. The object of my prayer was that this perplexity might be removed; and the next day, when I set about examining my mind, I found that it was entirely removed, and that it was replaced by a degree of certain conviction, totally different from any thing I had before experienced. It would be difficult to express the satisfaction and joy which I derived from this alteration. 'Now know I that my Redeemer liveth' was the sentiment uppermost in my mind, and in the merits of that Redeemer I felt a confidence that made me look on the prospect of death with perfect indifference. No one action of my life presented itself with any

sort of consolation. I knew that by myself I stood justly condemned; but I felt released from the penalties of sin by the blood of our sacrifice. In *Him* was all my trust.

"My dear wife gave me great pleasure by repeating this text—'This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners.' Once or twice only I felt some doubt whether I did not deceive myself arguing in this manner: —'How is it that I, who have passed so unguarded a life, and who have to lament so many sins, and especially so much carelessness in religion—how is it that I feel at once satisfied and secure in the acceptance of my Saviour? But I soon was led to better thoughts. Canst thou pretend to limit the mercies of the Most High? 'His thoughts are not as our thoughts, nor his ways as our ways.' He giveth to the labourer of an hour as much as to him who has borne the heat of the day. These were my reflections, and they made me easy."

When the medical gentleman who attended him observed that he must be in low spirits, "Very far from it," he replied: "I feel a joyfulness at heart which would enable me to go through any pain." "From faith in Christ?" he was asked. "Yes, from faith in Christ," was his reply; and, mentioning the clear view he now had of Christ being his Redeemer, he said, "It is an inexpressible favour beyond my deserts. What have I done all my life long? Nothing, nothing, that did God service, and for *me* to have such mercy shown! My hope," he added, "is to be received as one of Christ's flock, to enter heaven as a little child." A day or two afterwards he said, "I shall never again pass negligently over that passage in the Prayer Book, 'We bless thee . . . for thine inestimable love in the redemption of the world by our Lord Jesus Christ;'" and he broke forth into thanksgiving for the mercy, "the unbounded, the unmerited love," displayed towards him, in having the Christian doctrine brought home to his heart. When Mr. S. Hoare entered the room where he lay, Mr. Buxton

fixed his eyes upon him, and emphatically said, "Sam! I only wish you were as ill as I am!" When he recovered, he explained that he so greatly felt the effect upon his own mind, that he could not but wish his companion to share in the advantage. Again and again he declared how glad and thankful he was for his illness, and, at the same time, how anxious he felt lest the impression it had made upon him should become effaced.

After his recovery he thus writes to Earlham:—

"Perhaps you might think that your letters were not sufficiently valued by me if they remained unnoticed; they were both truly welcome, especially where they described your feelings at the prospect of the termination (I earnestly hope only the earthly termination) of our long and faithful union. My wife tells me that she said in her letter that I mentioned you all in my illness. This was but a languid description of the extent and force of love I felt towards you, and of gratitude to you, to whom I owe so great a portion of all that has been pleasant to me in my past life, and perhaps much of that which was consolatory to me at that awful but happy period. C—— calls it a chastisement, but I never felt it as such. I looked upon it when I was at the worst (and have not yet ceased to do so) as a gift and a blessing, and the choicest of my possessions. When I was too weak to move or speak, my mind and heart were at full work on these meditations, and my only lamentation was that I could not feel sufficiently glad or grateful for the mercy, as unbounded as unmerited, which I experienced. This mercy was, to know the sins of my past life, that the best actions of it were but dust and ashes, and good for nothing; that, by the righteous doom of the law, I stood convicted and condemned; but that full and sufficient satisfaction had already been made by Him who came to save sinners; and such was the ease and confidence with which this conviction inspired me, that death was not attended with a terror."

Fifteen years afterwards* he thus refers to the impressions made upon his mind during this illness. "It

* Cromer, 1828.

was then," he says, "that some clouds in my mind were dispersed; and from that day to this, whatever reason I may have had to distrust my own salvation, I have never been harassed by a doubt respecting our revealed religion." As his health and strength returned, he engaged with increased earnestness in supporting various benevolent societies, especially the Bible Society; and his common-place books during the years 1813—1816 are chiefly filled with memoranda on this subject. He came prominently forward in the controversy between the supporters of the Bible Society and those who united with Dr. Marsh* in opposing it.

These occupations filled up the short intervals of leisure afforded by his close attention to business; and while he continued to reside at the brewery few events occurred to vary his life. Some glimpses into the state of his mind are given in the following letters:—

"Spitalfields, Dec. 25. 1813.

"* * * I have often observed the advantage of having some fixed settling time in pecuniary affairs. It gives an opportunity of ascertaining the balance of losses and gains, and of seeing where we have succeeded and where failed, and what errors or neglects have caused the failure.

"Now, I thought, why not balance the mind in the same way—observe our progress, and trace to their source our mistakes and oversights? And what better time for this than Christmas-day followed by Sunday? And what better employment of those days? So it was fixed; and consequently I refused invitation after invitation—to Upton, Doughty Street, Plashet, Hampstead, Coggeshall, and Clifton. And now for a history of my day. After breakfast I read, *attentively*, the 1st of St. Peter, with some degree of that spirit with which I always wish to study the Scriptures. To me, at least, the Scriptures are nothing without prayer; and it is sometimes surprising to me what beauties they unfold, how much even of worldly wisdom

* Afterwards Bishop of Peterborough.

they contain, and how they are stamped with the clear impression of truth, when read under any portion of this influence; and without it how unmoving they appear.

"I also read Cooper's first Practical Sermon, the text—'What is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?' This is a subject which, of all others of the kind, most frequently engages my thoughts. * * * Well, I went to church: we had one of Mr. Pratt's best sermons, and I stayed the Communion. I could not but feel grateful to see so many persons who at least had some serious thoughts of religion—especially that Charles and his wife were of the number, and I may add, that I was also. I am not so ignorant of myself as to think that I have made any suitable advances. No. Every day's experience is a sufficient antidote against any such flattering delusion; for every day I see, and have reason to condemn, the folly, the insanity which immerses me—the whole of my mind and powers—in so trifling a portion of their interest as this world contains. But yet I feel it an inestimable blessing to have been conducted to the precincts and the threshold of truth, and to have some desires, vague and ineffectual as they are, after better things.

"In the evening I sat down, in a business-like manner, to my mental account. In casting up the incidental blessings of the year, I found none to compare with my illness; it gave such a life, such a reality and nearness, to my prospects of futurity; it told me, in language so conclusive and intelligible, that here is not my abiding city. It expounded so powerfully the Scriptural doctrine of Atonement, by showing what the award of my fate must be if it depended upon my own merits, and what that love is which offers to avert condemnation by the merits of another: in short, my sickness has been a source of happiness to me in every way."

In the autumn of the following year he again alludes to that "one religious subject which most frequently engaged his thoughts." After speaking of the death of his early friend, John Gurney, as "a loss hardly admitting of consolation," he adds,—

"But it is surely from the shortness of our vision that we

dwell so frequently on the loss of those who are dear to us. Are they gone to a better home? Shall we follow them? These are questions of millions and millions of centuries. The former is but a question of a few years. When I converse with these considerations, I cannot express what I think of the stupendous folly of myself and the rest of mankind. If the case could be so transposed, that our worldly businesses and pleasures were to last for ever, and our religion were to produce effects only for a few years, then, indeed, our, at least my, dedication of heart to present concerns would be reasonable and prudent; then I might justify the many hours and anxious thoughts devoted to the former, and might say to the latter, 'The few interrupted moments and wandering unfixed thoughts I spare you, are as much as your transitory nature deserves.' * * * Alas! alas! how is it that as children of this world we are wiser than as children of light!"

In the summer of the year 1815 he removed from London to a house at North End, Hampstead, that his children, now four in number, might have the benefit of country air. The following extract is from his commonplace book: —

"North End, Sunday, Aug. 6. 1815.

"Being too unwell to go to church, I have spent the morning (with occasional wanderings in the fields) in reading and pondering upon the Bible: viz. St. James's and St. John's epistles. How much sound wisdom and practical piety in the first, how devout and holy a spirit breathes through the second!—the one exposing, with a master's hand, the infirmities, the temptations, and the delusions of man; the other, evidencing the love he teaches, seems of too celestial a spirit to mingle much with human affairs, and perpetually reverts to the source of his consolation and hope: with him, Christ is all in all, the sum and substance of all his exhortations, the beginning and end of every chapter.

"I now sit down to recall some marked events which have lately happened. First then, Friday, July 7th, was an extraordinary day to me. In the morning I ascertained that all the hopes we had indulged of large profits in business were false. We were sadly disappointed, for I went to town in the morning some thousands of pounds richer in my own estimation than I returned

at night. This was my first trial; next, about nine o'clock, a dreadful explosion of gunpowder took place in a house adjacent to the brewery; eight lives were lost, and great damage done. For a long time it seemed beyond hope to expect to keep the fire from the premises. The morning changed me from affluence to competence, and the evening was likely to have converted competence into poverty.

"To finish all, at night my house was robbed. This, if we had heard it, might have seriously alarmed my wife, in her present delicate state of health. How easily can I bear the transitions of fortune, and see without murmuring, and even with cheerfulness, my golden hopes blighted! but 'bitter indeed and intimately keen,' would any wound be that affected *her*. I have often repeated these lines of Shakspeare: —

> ——— "'Steep me in poverty to the very lips,
> Give to captivity me and my utmost hopes,
> I still can find in some part of my soul
> A drop of patience—
> But there, where I have garner'd up my heart,' &c.

"On the following Tuesday I went to Weymouth, and found the affairs of a friend, in whom I am sincerely interested, in a very bad state. This is to me a subject of much anxiety; but on my return home I had another and a deeper trial. I found it was necessary to investigate ——'s business, which seems involved in much difficulty. These two events together have been very mortifying to me, but I have endeavoured to meet them with submissive fortitude. Yet I find that I can suffer my own misfortunes with comparative indifference, but cannot sit so easily under the misfortunes of those that are near to me; but in this I hope to improve, and to be enabled to look upon trials, in whatever form they appear, as visitations from the merciful hand of God. I hope my late uneasinesses have not been entirely thrown away upon me: they have brought me to feel the poverty and unsteadfastness of all human possessions, and to look upon life as a flower that falleth, while the grace and the fashion of it perisheth — as a vapour that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away. It has made me too (though still sadly deficient) more earnest and more frequent in my appeals and entreaties to God, that he would give me his wisdom to direct me, and his strength to support me; and, above all

that he would emancipate my heart from the shackles of the flesh, and fix my hopes beyond all that is in the world, 'the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eye, and the pride of life.' Turn my heart to thee, O Lord; make me to feel, daily and hourly to feel, as well as know — to act upon the persuasion, as well as to be persuaded — that only in thee I can rest in peace, and only in thy service I can act with wisdom."

To Mrs. Buxton, at Earlham.

"Hampstead, Sunday, Oct. 29. 1815.

"* * * I have all the week set my mind on writing to you to-day; but this is not the only temptation that operates at present, for if I have not your company I must have ———'s, who is in the next room and seems very desirous of improving my Sunday by edifying converse on shooting. I have been quite comfortable since I returned to town, found things in tolerable order, and have been as busy as a bee. I do not know when I have had so many things of some importance to manage or when I have spent my time in business more to my satisfac tion. My mind and heart have been instantly engaged in it, and I have thought as little of shooting, since I returned to business, as I did of business while I was shooting. I know you would not like the unsettlement of the plan I have in my head, which is, after a few years, to live somewhere quiet in the country, and go to town for one week in a month. I think that with strict unsparing rules, this is all that would be necessary: the unsettlement would be no objection to me, for I do not find that change from one employment to another quite different produces it; and I fancy that I could brew one hour, study mathematics the next, shoot the third, and read poetry the fourth, without allowing any one of these pursuits to interfere with the others. This habit of full engagement of the mind has its advantages in business and other things, but is attended with this serious disadvantage, that it immerses the mind so fully in its immediate object, that there is no room for thoughts of higher importance and more real moment to creep in. I feel this continually, — the hours and hours that I spend in utter forgetfulness of that which I well know to be the only thing of importance. How very great a portion of one's life there is in which one might as well be a heathen!"

"Spitalfields, Nov. 1. 1815.

"I went this evening to a general meeting of the adult school. I was very much interested by it, and made a speech, which was received with shouts, nay, roars of applause! The good that has already been done is quite extraordinary: exclusive of one hundred and fifty persons who have improved in reading, eighty-nine, who did not know their letters, can now read well. We had five exhibited, and their performance was grand; but the effect upon their *lives* is still better than on their *literature*. Then we had a variety of fine speeches. I do not much admire meetings of ladies and gentlemen, but the tradesmen speaking to the mechanics is a treat to me: first, it is so entertaining to hear them, such sublimity, such grandeur, such superfine images; one fine fellow harvested a rich crop of corn off a majestic oak, and the simile was received with a burst of applause. But if this is entertaining, the zeal and warmth with which they speak and *act* is very interesting; and I really prefer their blundering heartiness to the cool and chaste performances of more erudite orators."

Writing in February, 1816, after being engaged at a distance from home in settling the affairs of some near connections: —

"So ends my history; and I ought, and I do, feel thankful that circumstances have made me the instrument of doing some good, and communicating so much pleasure there. I found them all sad, and I believe they each felt that my visit had been a kind of blessing. So far, so good; but do not imagine that I take the credit, or am elated at my own achievements. I have felt thankful to be the agent, but I do not forget that I am only the agent. I often wonder at the slow progress I have made of late years in religion, but in this one respect I feel different. I see the hand of a directing Providence in the events of life, the lesser as well as the greater; and this is of great importance to me, for the belief that your actions, if attempted aright, are guided and directed by superior wisdom, is to me one of the greatest inducements to prayer: and I do think that the little trials I have met with have materially contributed to produce with me a habit of prayer."

Long before that period, to which he, at least, referred his first real acquaintance with the truths of Christianity, the peculiar features of his disposition had been cast in strong and permanent relief; and the religious acts of his mind are deeply stamped with the fashion of its native character. It possessed one element which beyond all others gave shape to the development of his religious principles. This was his power of realising the conceptions of his mind and imagination with scarcely less force and vividness than that which realised external objects. Thus he grasped the idea of a future state, not with a mere passive belief, but with a strong effective conviction, as *a matter of fact* of startling plainness, and which gave him to a remarkable degree a consciousness of the hollow vanity of all earthly pleasures and interests. But what chiefly marked his religious character was the absolute childlike confidence with which he clung to the guiding hand of his heavenly Father, wherever his path might lie. There was, in fact, no event in his life which he did not attribute to His immediate direction. "I do not want," he said, "to have religion proved to me: a superintending Providence is clear to demonstration. *There* is a proof of it," holding out his hand, and showing how perfect was its mechanism. This led to a constant habit of communicating his cares to his heavenly Father. "Prayer is throwing up the heart to God continually," he said, "not always using words, but casting up the thoughts to Him. Every thing leads me to prayer, and I always find it answered, both in little and great things." When anticipating that a material improvement would take place in his circumstances, his prayers were constant and fervent that the proposed advantage should not be granted him, unless it would be good for him and his family. "If it be denied

me," he observed, "I can only say and feel that I still thank God; and if it is appointed for me, I am sure it will be safe and good. I am as easy to leave it as if it concerned only a 5*l.* note." No one that ever attended his family prayers could avoid being struck by the intense earnestness with which he poured out his feelings upon his public undertakings before God. He spread the subject before Him, wrestling with Him in prayer for aid and guidance; and though he spared no exertions of his own, he always felt that God alone could give the increase. Nor when success had followed his efforts did he forget Him from whom that success had been derived. Indeed, he habitually received the will of God, not only with submission, but thankfulness.

Again, and again, and again, in his papers of religious meditations, does he recur to the different events of his life, and trace with grateful pleasure the moulding hand of Providence. "The clusters of mercies received" are enumerated repeatedly in careful detail, and his appointment to the advocacy of the oppressed and neglected is always included as a source of deep thankfulness and wonder that such as he should have been permitted thus to labour in his Master's service. This strong reliance on the presiding care of God grew with him year by year, as his experience widened, and he loved to count up the instances in which, as he firmly believed, he had seen the ways of himself and others directed by the hands of Providence to its own great ends. An unfinished paper, detailing various providential escapes he had met with, refers, after alluding to many earlier ones, to one that occurred in the winter of 1815:—

"Mr. Back and I," he says, "went into the brewery to survey the repairs which were going on; we were standing upon a plank, with only room for two, face to face; we changed places in

order that I might survey a spot to which he was directing my attention; his hat was on, I was uncovered: as soon as we had changed places, several bricks fell from the roof, and one struck his head; his hat in some measure averted the blow, but he never recovered the injury, and died shortly afterwards of an oppression on the brain."

To Joseph John Gurney, Esq.

"Hampstead, April 12. 1816.

"It is very true that I have been worried of late, but not about the Malt Tax, for that is only a question of profit, of one that I could not regulate, and I find no disposition in my mind to regret what is irremediable. The thing which has given me uneasiness is the discovery of what I consider errors in the management of the department of the brewery which has fallen to me lately; and these errors I am determined to cure. Now this involves much labour — but labour I do not regard — and some anxiety, considering my inexperience upon many points connected with it; but I cannot say that I have felt this much. The true cause of my disquietude arises from a certain feature in my own mind, which I can hardly describe; a kind of unregulated ardour in any pursuit which appears to me to be of great importance, which takes captive all my faculties and binds them down to that pursuit, and will not let them or me rest till it is accomplished. I hate this; it is so unpleasant to wake, and to go to sleep with your head full of vats and tubs; and I disapprove it more than I hate it. No man, I think, can have more abstract conviction of the folly and futility of such engagement of heart upon objects so utterly trifling and undurable. I see that it is an infirmity: I deeply feel that it chokes the good seed, and is a most pernicious weed, and I feel the breaches that it makes in my own quiet: yet so much am I its slave, that it will intrude into the midst of such reflections, and carry me off to my next gyle.* How sincerely I do often wish that I could direct this fervent energy about temporals into its proper channel — that I could be as warm about things of infinite importance, as I am about dust and ashes!

"If I cannot accomplish this, I wish we could divide it — I

* A "gyle" is the technical name for a brewing.

keep half for my business, and give you half for your book.* How can you, my dear brother, be languid and spiritless, with such a thing before you, and with such a capacity for doing it excellently? Are you not ashamed that I should be more anxious about making porter than you are about making Christians? At it, my dear fellow! at it with vigour; but when you find your mind unsuited for it, write me another letter, for the last was a great pleasure to

"Your affectionate brother,

"T. F. BUXTON."

* On the Evidences of the Christian Religion. See the Works of Joseph John Gurney.

CHAPTER V.

1816, 1817.

ADVENTURE WITH A MAD DOG. — DISTRESS IN SPITALFIELDS. — MR. BUXTON'S SPEECH. — LETTERS. — ESTABLISHMENT OF PRISON DISCIPLINE SOCIETY.—DEATH OF CHARLES BUXTON.—JOURNEY ON THE CONTINENT. — LETTERS. — INCIDENT AT THE BREWERY. — BOOK ON PRISON DISCIPLINE.

An incident which occurred during the summer of 1816 is thus mentioned by Mr. Buxton in a letter to his wife, who fortunately was absent at the time: —

"Spitalfields, July 15. 1816.

"As you must hear the story of our dog Prince, I may as well tell it you. On Thursday morning, when I got on my horse at S. Hoare's, David told me that there was something the matter with Prince, that he had killed the cat, and almost killed the new dog, and had bit at him and Elizabeth. I ordered him to be tied up and taken care of, and then rode off to town. When I got into Hampstead, I saw Prince covered with mud, and running furiously, and biting at every thing. I saw him bite at least a dozen dogs, two boys, and a man.

"Of course I was exceedingly alarmed, being persuaded he was mad. I tried every effort to stop him or kill him, or to drive him into some outhouse, but in vain. At last he sprang up at a boy, and seized him by the breast; happily I was near him, and knocked him off with my whip. He then set off towards London, and I rode by his side, waiting for some opportunity of stopping him. I continually spoke to him, but he paid no regard to coaxing or scolding. You may suppose I was seriously alarmed, dreading the immense mischief he might do, having seen him do so much in the few preceding minutes. I was terrified at the idea of his getting into Camden Town and London, and at length considering that, if ever there was an occasion that justified a risk of life, this was it, I determined to catch him myself. Happily he ran up to Pryor's gate, and I threw myself from

my horse upon him, and caught him by the neck: he bit at me and struggled, but without effect, and I succeeded in securing him, without his biting me. He died yesterday, raving mad.

"Was there ever a more merciful escape? Think of the children being gone! I feel it most seriously, but I cannot now write more fully. I have not been at all nervous about it, though certainly rather low, occasioned partly by this, and partly by some other things.

"I do not feel much fit for our Bible meeting on Wednesday —but I must exert myself.

"P.S. Write me word whether Fowell has any wound on his fingers, and if he has one made by the dog, let it be cut out immediately; mind, these are my positive orders."

He afterwards mentioned some particulars which he had omitted in this hurried letter.

"When I seized the dog," he said, "his struggles were so desperate that it seemed at first almost impossible to hold him, till I lifted him up in the air, when he was more easily managed, and I contrived to ring the bell. I was afraid that the foam, which was pouring from his mouth in his furious efforts to bite me, might get into some scratch, and do me injury; so with great difficulty I held him with one hand while I put the other into my pocket and forced on my glove; then I did the same with my other hand, and at last the gardener opened the door, saying, 'What do you want?' 'I've brought you a mad dog, replied I; and telling him to get a strong chain, I walked into the yard, carrying the dog by his neck. I was determined not to kill him, as I thought, if he should prove not to be mad, it would be a great satisfaction to the three persons whom he had bitten. I made the gardener, who was in a terrible fright, secure the collar round his neck and fix the other end of the chain to a tree, and then walking to its furthest range, with all my force, which was nearly exhausted by his frantic struggles, I flung him away from me, and sprang back. He made a desperate bound after me, but finding himself foiled, he uttered the most fearful yell I ever heard. All that day he did nothing but rush to and fro, champing the foam which gushed from his jaws; we threw him meat, and he snatched at it with fury, but instantly dropped it again.

"The next day, when I went to see him, I thought the chain seemed worn, so I pinned him to the ground between the prongs of a pitchfork, and then fixed a much larger chain round his neck. When I pulled off the fork, he sprang up and made a dash at me, which snapped the old chain in two. He died in forty-eight hours from the time he went mad."

He writes to his wife a day or two afterwards: —

"I shot all the dogs and drowned all the cats. The man and boys who were bitten are doing pretty well: their wounds were immediately attended to, cut, and burnt out.

"What a terrible business it was! You must not scold me for the risk I ran; what I did I did from a conviction that it was my duty, and I never can think that an over cautious care of self in circumstances where your risk may preserve others is so great a virtue as you seem to think it. I do believe that if I had shrunk from the danger, and others had suffered in consequence, I should have felt more pain than I should have done had I received a bite."

The winter of 1816 set in early, and with great severity: the silk trade was almost stagnant, and the weavers in Spitalfields, always trembling on the brink of starvation, were plunged into the deepest misery. It was increased by the constant influx into the parish of the poorest class of London work-people, who could find no lodging elsewhere. A soup society had been long before established, but the distress far exceeded the means provided for its alleviation. Under these circumstances it was determined to hold a meeting on the subject at the Mansion House. Mr. Buxton and Mr. Samuel Hoare delayed their usual visit to Norfolk, in order to explore and assist in relieving the sufferings of the Spitalfields poor.

To Mrs. Buxton, at Earlham.

"Spitalfields, Nov. 9. 1816.

"* * * S. Hoare and I came from Hampstead to attend a committee this morning, and afterwards visited the poor. The

wretchedness was great indeed, but I felt most compassion for a poor old creature of eighty, living alone without a fire or blanket. She seemed quite bewildered by the sight of silver; her twilight of intellect lost in gratitude and amazement. Poor old thing! that she, with all the infirmities of age, and without one earthly consolation, should look upon the prospect of a good meal as a cause of extravagant joy and real happiness, and that we, with the command of every comfort, in full strength, without a bodily want, should ever repine at trifling discomfitures, is, I hope, a lesson. We are going to have a public meeting, and I trust a profitable one, for without a large supply of money we must suspend our operations. George Kett sent me 50*l.* to-day."

"Spitalfields, Nov. 22. 1816.

"I did not write to you yesterday because really I had not a moment's time; the committees and my own business occupy every moment. I had a pleasant journey up to town. I had much upon my mind—our conversation about the eclipse. The vastness of the creation is indeed a subject for meditation. 'The heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament showeth his handiwork.' 'When I consider the stars which thou hast made, and the heavens which are the work of thy hand, what is man that thou art mindful of him?' How truly do these words describe the thoughts to which the vast spectacle of nature, especially the heavenly bodies, rolling in their appointed orbits, give rise! What a sermon these are upon the mightiness of the Creator, and upon the insignificance of man! and yet that we, who are truly dust and nothingness, should have the presumption to defy the power of the Almighty, to resist his commands, and to place our whole souls and hearts upon that which he tells us is but vanity; this is (if nothing else were) a demonstration that the heart of man is 'deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked.' On the other hand, that a Being so infinitely great should condescend to invite us to our duty, and to call that duty his service, proves as strongly that he has crowned us with loving kindness and tender mercy.

"I am well, and our proceedings about the poor prosper;—but oh, my speech! When shall I be able to think of it? I fear that I shall go to the meeting with it all in a jumble, and

this would be wicked, as it would injure the good cause. I do try, I hope, not to mingle too much of self in my earnest desires for its success, and I am not forgetful of my usual resource in difficulty—prayer.

"I am now going to the workhouse. I shall reach Earlham on Tuesday. S. Hoare and Abraham Plastow will be with me, and I hope the latter will be treated with deserved distinction, as he was for the first twelve years of my life the dearest friend I had."

"Nov. 27. 1816.

"Well, our meeting went off capitally. I felt very flat, and did not go through the topics I meant to touch upon, and upon the whole considered it as a kind of failure; but as I had entreated that what was best might be done, I did not feel at all disheartened; but, to my great surprise, all others took a very different sense of it.

"Tell dear Priscy I send her the 'Morning Chronicle,' that she may read Papa's speech, and I hope it will make her desirous of serving the poor."

A brief extract may be given from this speech. After mentioning the causes which had produced, he says, "a degree, an expanse of distress utterly beyond my powers to describe," he continues —

"I could detain you till midnight with the scenes we have witnessed. From these rough minutes which I hold in my hand, taken on the spot, in the very houses of the poor, drawn not from the fictions of a warm imagination, but from scenes of actual life—from the sad realities before us, I could disclose to you a faithful though a faint picture of such desperate calamity and unutterable ruin, that the heart must be stony indeed that did not sicken at the sight. First, I would lead you to the roof of a house hardly deserving the name of a garret; there sat three human beings, each seventy years of age—each with the ghastly lineaments of famine; a few bricks were their only chair and their only table; a little of our soup their only provision; a little straw and some shreds of an old coat their only bed! Next, I would show you a family of nine; the father disabled—the mother sickly—their furniture, their bed, their looms—every article of present use, the very implements of future labour, had

been surrendered to the demands of hunger! I will not exhaust your feelings by further recitals of what has met our eyes, but hasten to a larger topic. * * * * * * *

"My Lord, I feel more and more that I cannot do justice to the distress. I wish I could prevail upon you to see it with your own eyes. Come when you please, select almost your own street, almost your own house in that street, your own room in that house, and I undertake that in that room you will find a proof that our picture is faint and feeble. Come amongst us, and we will show you the father of a large family, whom we found in the act of pulling down his stove, to exchange it for food. The dread of future cold was less violent than the cravings of immediate hunger. Come by day, and we will lead you to a widow in the last stage of illness, yet—the only blanket of the dying wretch has been sent to procure bread! Come by night, and we will show you the baskets and the sheds of our markets filled with these wretched creatures—there they find their nightly lodging, and there amongst its scraps and refuse they pick out their daily food. * * In ordinary times the poor are the best friends of the poor. There is (and happy is it) a sympathy in affliction (we find it as a ray of light amid the gloom), a fellow-feeling in distress, a kind of benefit society to which all the wretched are free,—a society not indeed enrolled and registered by Act of Parliament, but by higher authority, and with more awful sanction, by the instincts which Providence has implanted in the human heart; but this is a virtue for better times. The poor man can hardly support himself, and therefore can hardly assist others. I do not mean to say that he does not. We have met with instances which have exalted our respect for human nature—instances which recall the widow recorded in the New Testament, who 'out of her want gave all her living;' and the widow of Sarepta in the Old Testament, whose whole possession was 'a handful of meal in a barrel, and a drop of oil in a cruse,' yet she was willing to share them with the afflicted stranger. But if this prove that the poor are not bereft of every ordinary support, is it not a lesson to us? If the poor man who is obliged to deny his unsatiated appetites,—who, having divided sufficient from his only loaf to support life, but not to satisfy hunger, hides the remainder for the next day's meal,—if he yet find some place for mercy in his soul, and, miserable himself, is

yet impelled to share his remaining crust with the more miserable,—if the strong impulse of humanity urges him to so dear a sacrifice, does it not teach the man who is clothed in soft raiment and fares sumptuously every day, to give something more than the crumbs that fall from his table to the wretchedness that surrounds his gate? But why this superior mercy in the poor? Because he has learned it in the school of affliction. He knows what it is to want bread, and this has opened his heart and enlivened his affections for those who are exposed to the rigour of the season and the craving importunities of hunger; but the rich man cannot feel this. He can experimentally know nothing of what it is, when the poor man, willing to strain every nerve in labour, is denied the employment which might stanch the tears of his wife and appease the cries of his children,—when, like the wretch I have mentioned, he is willing to suffer, if he might suffer alone, firm against his own afflictions, but, when he looks around him, sunk to the effeminacy of tears."

He might fairly be surprised by the universal attention which this speech received. Nothing could be more commendatory than the mention made of it in the newspapers; and letters of congratulation poured in from all sides. One from Mr. Wilberforce, the first written by him to his future ally and successor, may be deemed almost prophetic.

"My dear Sir, "Kensington Gore, Nov. 28. 1816.

"I must in three words express the real pleasure with which I have both read and heard of your successful effort on Tuesday last, in behalf of the hungry and the naked. * * * But I cannot claim the merit of being influenced only by regard for the Spitalfields sufferers, in the pleasure I have received from your performances at the meeting. It is partly a selfish feeling, for I anticipate the success of the efforts which I trust you will one day make in other instances, in an assembly in which I trust we shall be fellow-labourers, both in the motives by which we are actuated, and in the objects to which our exertions will be directed.

"I am, my dear Sir,

"Yours sincerely,

"W. WILBERFORCE."

The speech reappeared in publications of the most widely different character. It was republished by the Spitalfields Benevolent Society, as the best means of creating sympathy with their exertions; it was republished by Hone and the democrats, as the best statement of the miseries permitted under the existing government; and it was republished by the friends of that government, "because," said they, "it forms so beautiful a contrast to the language of those wretched demagogues, whose infamous doctrines would increase the evils they affect to deplore."

"By this one meeting at the Mansion House," says the report of the Spitalfields Benevolent Society, "43,369*l.* were raised." Two days after it had been held, Lord Sidmouth sent for Mr. Buxton, to inform him, that "the Prince had been so pleased by the spirit and temper of the meeting, and so strongly felt the claims that had been urged, that he had sent them 5000*l.*"

With these exertions for the poor around him, Mr. Buxton's public career may be said to have commenced. He was now launched upon that stream of labour for the good of others, along which his course lay for the remainder of his life. His letters show the eagerness of his desire to be employing his energies in warring against the evils around him. "I want to be living in a higher key," he remarked, "to do some good before I die." His prayers were incessant that God would employ him as an instrument of spreading his kingdom, and of doing good to mankind. He had great delight in the service of his Lord and Master; nor did he ever forget to thank God with deep gratitude when any opportunity, however trifling, was afforded him of exerting himself for others. To one of his relations, who had

entered upon a benevolent undertaking which required considerable personal sacrifices, he writes,—

"For my part, I cannot lament for and pity those who make great sacrifices in compliance with conscience; such dedication of self is, in my view, much more a matter of envy. Assuredly, if we could look at such sacrifices throughout their whole extent, in their consequences here to others, and hereafter to ourselves, we should perceive that the permission to be so engaged is a privilege of inestimable value. I am certain that you are only actuated by a conviction of duty, and shall I repine and grieve because you are enabled to follow so high a director? Or shall I not rather heartily rejoice that you are called to such a service, and that the call is not resisted? I often think of those verses in the Acts, 'rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for his name; and daily in the Temple, and in every house, they ceased not to teach and to preach Jesus Christ.' And so I am half inclined to envy you, and more than half to wish that, somehow or other, I were as well engaged."

It was no part of his character to indulge in vague desires without a bold struggle for their accomplishment. Having done what he could in relieving the miseries of his poor neighbours, he soon entered upon a wider field of benevolence.

One day, while walking past Newgate with Mr. Samuel Hoare, their conversation turned upon the exertions of their sister-in-law Mrs. Fry, and her companions, for the improvement of the prisoners within its walls; and this suggested the idea of employing themselves in a similar manner. They soon entered into communication with Mr. William Crawford, Mr. Peter Bedford, and other gentlemen who were also anxious to improve the condition, at that time deplorable to the last degree, of the English jails.

The exertions of Mrs. Fry and her associates had prepared the way; public attention had been drawn to the subject; and in 1816 the Society for the Reformation of

Prison Discipline was formed. In the list of the committee, Mr. Buxton's name stands between those of Dr. Lushington and Lord Suffield (then the Hon. E. Harbord), both of whom were afterwards so closely associated with him in the attack upon negro slavery.

On January the 5th, 1817, he writes from Hampstead to Mrs. Buxton,—

"After I had written to you yesterday, I went with Peter Bedford and Charles on a visit to Newgate. I saw four poor creatures who are to be executed on Tuesday next. Poor things! God have mercy on them! The sight of them was sufficient for that day. I felt no further inclination to examine the prison. It has made me long much that my life may not pass quite uselessly; but that, in some shape or other, I may assist in checking and diminishing crime and its consequent misery. Surely it is in the power of all to do something in the service of their Master; and surely I, among the rest, if I were now to begin and endeavour, to the best of my capacity, to serve Him, might be the means of good to some of my fellow-creatures. This capacity is, I feel, no mean talent, and attended with no inconsiderable responsibility. I must pray that I may at length stir myself up, and be enabled to feel somewhat of the real spirit of a missionary, and that I may devote myself, my influence, my time, and, above all, my affections, to the honour of God, and the happiness of man. My mission is evidently not abroad, but it is not less a mission on that account. I feel that I may journey through life by two very different paths, and that the time is now come for choosing which I will pursue. I may go on as I have been going on, not absolutely forgetful of futurity, nor absolutely devoted to it. I may get riches and repute, and gratify my ambition, and do some good and more evil; and, at length, I shall find all my time on earth expended, and in retracing my life I shall see little but occasions lost, and capacities misapplied. The other is a path of more labour and less indulgence. I may become a real soldier of Christ; I may feel that I have no business on earth but to do his will and to walk in his ways, and I may direct every energy I have to the service of others. Of

these paths, I know which I would most gladly choose: 'but what I would, that I do not; but what I hate, that do I.' In short, the cares, and the pleasures, and the business of this world choke the good seed, and we are perpetually deceived. We would sow to the spirit, and we sow to the flesh; we desire heaven, and we are chained to earth."

He now began to entertain thoughts of entering Parliament, and at the election of February, 1817, he went down to Weymouth, at the invitation of Mr. W. Williams, to stand on the same interest. He did not, however, offer himself as a candidate.

"Weymouth, Feb. 1817.

"I am far from regretting that I came, as I do not doubt it will secure me an independent seat next election: that word 'independent' has been the obstacle upon this occasion. I intend to spend a good portion of the next two years in preparation for the House. I hope I shall either do good, or receive pleasure, when I get there: as yet, I have had in politics neither one nor the other. I am pining for home: nothing suits me worse than this kind of busy leisure; too much to do to have time to myself, and too little to do to occupy my time."

"Hampstead, April 5.

"Last Sunday I was at Fakenham, with Charles, who is very unwell. God grant he may recover! I have much to thank God about with regard to him, his increased and increasing piety and seriousness. For myself, I sometimes fear my treasure is too much in my business, it is too much my amusement, the topic to which I turn with pleasure. South says, 'Whatsoever a man accounts his treasure, that he places his whole delight in: it entertains his eye, refreshes his fancy, feeds his thoughts, and affords him a continual feast.' God grant that I may so meditate in his law, and so dwell within the walls of his spiritual temple, that He, and my duties towards Him, may be my chief delight."

Soon afterwards he became absorbed in anxiety about his brother Charles, who had shown symptoms of a de-

cline, which at length proved fatal. A more grievous calamity could scarcely have befallen Mr. Buxton. Though their characters stood far apart, the two brothers had some points of strong and endearing resemblance. The lively gladness of heart which threw a constant sunshine over the countenance of the younger, would often relax the graver brow of the elder brother: and, indeed, though the pressure of care and business gave Mr. Buxton an habitually grave aspect, and though it was a part of his character to be so absorbed by the pursuit he had in hand as to seem abstracted, yet there was in him throughout life a vein of playfulness which showed itself often when least expected. Even when he himself was somewhat silent and oppressed, he courted the cheerfulness of others, and delighted in it. But the friend that could best enliven him was lost when his brother sunk into the grave.

To Mrs. Buxton.

"My dearest Wife, Weymouth, July 4. 1817.

"How difficult it is to pour out all the feelings of this day; memorable as it will be to me, for as bitter pain on the one hand, and as strong and joyful gratitude on the other, as ever I passed through! After such a tumult of feelings, I am now quite dull and confused, hardly crediting that it is anything but a dream, or that he that was my earliest friend, and so very near my heart, and with whom the ties of friendship were so exquisitely tender, should be passed away for ever, or rather for the short period of this pilgrimage; but if I feel the grief of having these ten thousand links of brotherhood snapped asunder, I hope and I think that I do more strongly feel the strong and sufficient consolations that surround us. Dear as he is to me (and there is an inexpressible fondness over his memory), I would not recall him to earth. If this world be a state of probation, he has passed through it, and is, I am persuaded, with the Saviour on whom he depended. I cannot say the satisfaction I feel in his state of mind of late — the deepest humility as to

himself, mixed with the firmest confidence in the sufficient merits of Christ. * * * I will now tell you events as they have passed. At Andover I found a letter from Anna, saying he was worse; and that I might be too late. I shall not easily forget the ride between Andover and Salisbury. I could only see the dark side, the deep and irreparable loss, and one chief joy of my life gone for ever. The remainder of the journey to Dorchester was rather anxious than any thing else. I particularly desired to see him once more, and I strongly hoped to have that comfort, but at Dorchester I heard of his peaceful end. Poor dear fellow! Between that and Weymouth, after indulging for a short time in groanings for us who remain, I felt the deepest gratitude on his account. I was so happy in his fate, and so sensible of the all-righteous hand which directed it! * * * Infinitely beyond all, how merciful and gladdening it is that those words, 'in sure and certain hope of a blessed resurrection,' are not at all too strong to express my convictions about him! He is bound to the very inmost recesses of my heart, when I recall and call up in my heart a thousand endearing recollections, his tenderness towards me, his playful manner, his ready sympathy in all that touched me, his nice sense of honour and delicate feelings. When all these rush into my mind (and they are twined round all the events that are past), I should be a mourner indeed if I had not an unfailing sense of consolation, 'a present help in time of trouble,' in the conviction of his happiness, and in the earnest hope of being again restored to him, in a state free from the impurities and imperfections of this world. Oh! how I do long to take to the warning of his example, to detach myself from the frailties and vanities of this world, to become a disciple and soldier of our Lord Jesus Christ, to remember 'righteousness, temperance, and the judgment to come!' and how I do feel that this admonition, like other deep ones which I have had, may pass away, and that I may be one of those of whom it may be said, 'it would have been better for him never to have known the ways of righteousness!'

"His being now in the land of Spirits before his Maker, and in the company of his Redeemer, in whom he so fully believed, and whom he loved, gives to me a familiarity with death which I never experienced. There is, I have almost thought, a community and sameness of feeling between brothers which is only

equalled by that between husband and wife. Oh! how I feel that this is gone! but I do not forget that I have others left who are perhaps as dear to me, besides yourself, my love. I went into the room by myself, wishing to return thanks, with his remains before me, for the inexpressible mercy displayed to him, and to pray that we who are left may be preserved from evil.

"Martha told me that Charles, on Tuesday, could not swallow; when she observed how sorry she was, he answered by repeating the story of the Samaritan woman at the well, and concluded by saying 'Though I cannot eat, and though I cannot drink, yet if I can but drink one glass of cold water at that living spring, I shall never thirst any more.'

"When somebody said to him, 'We must repent and then we shall be forgiven by Christ,' he said, 'You begin at the wrong end: we must first seek Christ, then He will give us repentance and forgiveness.' He was fully aware the last moment was approaching, and his soul seemed at times as if it were already in heaven. Send this to my aunt Gurney and Anna; with my dearest love to all."

"July 6. 1817.

"If we only consider the loss we have sustained, we must go mourning all the day long; if we consider the gain to him, it extracts the anguish from the wound. I cannot help following him in his present state. He, with whose views, and prospects, and feelings, and joys, I have till within a few days been so conversant, is now in a scene so new, so grand, so inexpressible, so infinitely beyond the rags and vanities of earth."—"I do not expect to feel Charles's funeral much," he says in another letter; "I have dwelt so much upon him as ascended to heaven, that I cannot, or rather do not so very closely connect the idea of him and his remains. I mean, in committing *them* to the earth, I do not feel as if I were committing *him* there."

Twenty years afterwards, in reviewing the leading occurrences of his life, he thus refers to this event:—

"I know of no tie, that of a husband and wife excepted, which could be stronger than the one which united Charles and me. We were what the lawyers call 'tenants in common' of every thing. He was, I think, the most agreeable person I ever knew.

A kind of original humour played about his conversation. It was not wit; it was anything rather than that species of humour which provokes loud laughter: it was not exactly naïveté, though that comes nearest to it; it was an intellectual playfulness which provided for every hour, and extracted from every incident a fund of delicate merriment. He died at Weymouth in the year 1817;—and Thou knowest, O Lord, and Thou only, how deeply I loved, and how long and how intensely I lamented him."

His brother's widow and children were the objects of his tender care. He took a house for them near his own at Hampstead, and as his brother-in-law, Mr. Samuel Hoare, resided in the same place, the three families became united in habits of the closest intercourse.

In the winter of 1817, Mr. and Mrs. Buxton and Mr. S. and Mr. J. J. Gurney went over to France, with the Rev. Francis Cunningham, who was anxious to establish a branch of the Bible Society at Paris. Mr. Buxton and his brothers-in-law took a great interest in this undertaking, and were also desirous to procure information, as to the excellent systems of prison discipline adopted in the jails of Antwerp and Ghent.

In crossing over to Boulogne the party met with an adventure which might have turned out seriously. Soon after leaving Dover, they were surrounded by a dense fog, in which they drifted about for two days and nights, without being able to conjecture what course the vessel was pursuing. To this anxiety actual suffering was soon added, for the packet contained many passengers, and there was no sleeping accommodation, and scarcely a morsel of food on board. A few mouldy biscuits and a piece of cheese were furnished at a high price by one of the sailors, with which the hungry party were obliged to be contented. In the course of the second night the braying of an ass warned

them of their near approach to land, and having narrowly avoided running the vessel ashore, a short dispersion of the fog at length enabled them to enter the harbour of Calais. After referring to this incident, Mr. Buxton proceeds in his diary:—

"I would not willingly forget the lesson taught of the value of food—of the pain of being restricted in it; these lines will recall my feelings:—

'Take physic, Pomp,
Expose thyself to feel what wretches feel,
That thou mayest shake the superflux to them.'"

The following are extracts from his diary:—

"Nov. 1. 1817.

"One cannot pass over from Dover to Calais without being struck with the immense expenditure which has been lavished upon the animosities of the two countries. We hear with astonishment of some hundred thousand pounds raised in England for the dispersion of the Bible through the world; of 20,000*l.* per annum raised to send missionaries to communicate to heathen nations the blessings of Christianity. Such exertions excite our admiration, elevate our country in our eyes, and even exalt our nature. But turn for a moment to the opposite picture, and observe ten times these enormous sums expended upon twenty acres of land at Dover, and as many at Calais,—not to promote civilisation or happiness, but for purposes of mutual hostility, defiance, aggression, and bloodshed. I do verily believe that the true, genuine, valorous, military spirit, is the true and genuine spirit inspired by the enemy of man, and I hope that I shall never refuse or be ashamed to avow these strange, extraordinary sentiments."

"Paris Nov. 10.

"Thus far I have thoroughly enjoyed my journey; the people are civil and engaging, and full of life. What an odd thing it is that our mutual rulers should have deemed it expedient that we should have spent the last twenty-three years in cutting each other's throats; and that we should so often have illuminated at the grateful intelligence that ten thousand of these our lively friends were killed and twenty thousand wounded! Surely we

must now think this a strange reason for rejoicing. Seeing the natives is an antidote to the pleasure of destroying them. If it be our duty to love our enemies, the military preparations are an extraordinary mode of displaying our affection. In truth it is a sad thing, that

> 'Straits interposed
> Make enemies of nations, which had else,
> Like kindred drops, been melted into one.'

"11*th*.—We went to Versailles to breakfast. Almost every bush has its statue. The fauns, tritons, Neptunes, heroes, Venuses, Dianas, mixed with the statues of Louis le Grand and Louis le Désiré (whose features defy all meaning), present an assemblage of fiction and fact, much to the advantage of the former.

"After visiting Versailles, we went to St. Cloud. This is a very comfortable and splendid abode, the furniture very beautiful and costly, and as much surpassing Versailles in cheerfulness as falling short of it in melancholy grandeur. It is the second record of departed glory which we have seen to-day: the third comes more home to our hearts. We this night, on our arrival at Paris, heard of the death of our Princess. We have all felt it as if she were bound to ourselves by the ties of kindred.

"12*th*.—We went to the Palace of the Luxemburg, and there saw Talleyrand;—a bishop in the reign of the King—an abjurer of Christianity when reason was deified—prime minister of Buonaparte till his Spanish expedition—one of the first to betray him—on his return offering his insidious assistance again to betray him—and now in full power!

"15*th*.—Went to the Legislative Assembly, and saw the rooms for the Peers. Wonderfully smart—too much so. Very different, indeed, are both these chambers from the negligent grandeur of the British Parliament.

"16*th*.—Francis Cunningham and I went to various persons, for the purpose of establishing a Bible Society. We found only M. Juillerat at home, with whom we had some encouraging conversation. His description of the state of religion in the country is truly deplorable. The Protestants are sadly indifferent, and the Roman Catholics are either quite philosophically careless or thoroughly bigoted.

"Baxter says, in his Life, something of this kind: — 'I did not know till now what a great sin tyranny is, which thus prevents the propagation of the Gospel:' and the difficulties we have this day felt in the establishment of the Bible Society from the restraints of Government, have united me in the same feeling.

"Went again to the Louvre, and greatly admired the Italian paintings; and, particularly, some of Claude's. I cannot like Rubens' great, sprawling, allegorical Deities."

His diary contains very full particulars relative to those prisons at Ghent and Antwerp which it was one purpose of his journey to examine. He was especially struck with the admirable management of the Maison de Force in the former town, and he determined to lay his account of it before the Prison Discipline Society in London.

"At Ghent we were told that when Buonaparte was emperor he demanded of the Roman Catholic College an approbation of his marriage with Maria Louisa, which they steadily refused. Soon after, he sent them a bishop, who was not properly ordained by the Pope, and they refused to obey him. On this he ordered a detachment of soldiers to surround the college, and to take every priest and student. He then sent them all off to his armies as soldiers; and of 330 thus sent but fifteen returned alive!"

"Sunday, Calais.

"Here we arrived at ten o'clock this morning, being compelled by the regulations of the fortified towns to travel some distance on this day. We regret this, as we would not willingly lend even our feeble countenance to the violation of the Sabbath, which this country everywhere presents.

"We all felt grateful for the encouraging intelligence that a Bible Society had been formed in Paris. I ardently hope that it may be the means of much direct good by the circulation of the Scriptures, and of much indirect good by causing intercourse between the Protestants of France and England. France, indeed, needs everything that can be done for her religious welfare. Religion is, as it were, almost abolished. I speak

generally, but I trust, and indeed I am persuaded, that this generality admits of very many exceptions; but altogether, there is little appearance of religion. The amusements and businesses of the Sunday — the utter absence of the Scriptures — the perpetual reiteration of 'Mon Dieu' in every sentence — the indifference as to truth — in short, all that strikes the eye and the ear, indicates the absence of any spiritual understanding."

Upon Mr. Buxton's return to England he communicated to the Prison Discipline Society the information which he had acquired with respect to the Maison de Force at Ghent, and this led to a request from the committee that his description of it might be published. "When I sat down to this task," he says, in the preface to his book, "the work insensibly grew upon my hands. It was necessary to prove that evils and grievances did exist in this country, and to bring home to these causes the increase of corruption and depravity. For this purpose repeated visits to prisons were requisite."

Accordingly, accompanied by Mr. Hoare, Mr. William Crawford, and others, he visited at different times the principal London jails, and examined with the utmost care into every part of the system pursued in them.

To the Rev. Francis Cunningham.

"Spitalfields, Dec. 1817.

"Since my return I have been much engaged in the London prisons, and my inquiries have developed a system of folly and wickedness which surpasses belief. A noise must be made about it, and (will you believe it?) I am going to turn author, and am preparing a pamphlet upon the subject of prisons.

"The recollection of our journey acquires new charms in my eyes, and I heartily rejoice we were induced to take it.

"Tell C——that if the result should in any way diminish the quantum of misery that is endured, and of vice which is hatched in our prisons — if it should be the means of encouraging the Protestant ministers of France, and of dispersing the Bible

through its forlorn population — I shall think we were almost repaid for the terrible, monstrous, shocking dangers we incurred when exposed to all the horrors of a *calm*.

"Can you give Major Close the name of the regiment at Mont Cassel which had no Bibles? If so, they will be immediately supplied."

To a Friend.

"Dec. 18. 1817.

"I never enjoyed my home more. I hardly ever was so sensible of enjoyment in it as since my return from France. To be happy I must be employed, and on a useful object, for between ourselves (but this is a profound secret) I am sick of having my heart in my vats."

He closed the year 1817 with the following reflections in his common-place book: —

"This year has been checquered with events of deep interest — some joyful and some dressed in the darkest sable. But how encouraging is it to be able to recognise in all, and especially in the mournful circumstances of the year, the hand of a merciful Providence! This day last year I spent with my beloved brother; together we went to our usual place of worship, to hear our (especially his) beloved minister *, and together we wandered through the future.

'But God has wisely hid from human eyes
The dark decrees of Fate.'

"Very soon afterwards I was called to Weymouth to the election. I need not now enter into the reasons which induced me not to stand; suffice it to say, I would not be dependent. With my determination I have been well satisfied. I fancy my election at a future period is very probable: if it will tend to my real good or the good of others, I believe it will be so determined by Providence; if not, I earnestly pray God to avert the fulfilment of my wishes. I am too well aware of my own blindness to have my heart much set on it. * * * While I was at Weymouth, my sweet boy, Harry, got through the bars of his nursery window, and was discovered merely holding by

* The Rev. Josiah Pratt.

his hands with the utmost unconcern. What was not his mother — what was not I spared! * * * What shall I render to the Lord for all his mercies to me, of which (next to his inestimable love in the redemption of the world) my wife is far the greatest? * * * I often wonder at the goodness of God, in giving to one so unworthy so rich a treasure.

"Soon after my return from Weymouth began the heaviest affliction of my life — the illness, the gradual and perceptible decay, alas! the death of my dearest brother. No day passes in which something or other does not recall his beloved image, his lively manners, his unity of heart. I trust that few days pass in which I forget to thank God for this dispensation, and to rejoice that he has, as I doubt not he has, 'for this corruptible put on incorruption.'

"His widow and her three children have been staying with us for some time, —much to my comfort, and, I hope, somewhat to hers. I have read and heard of acts of faithful affection; but I never heard, or read, or saw anything to compare with the affection, kindness, attention, and generosity displayed by S. Hoare to her.

"On Saturday last, in consequence of an almost obsolete promise to sleep in town when all the other partners were absent, I slept at Brick-lane. S. Hoare has complained to me that several of our men were employed on the Sunday. To inquire into this, in the morning I went into the brewhouse, and was led to the examination of a vat containing 170 ton weight of beer. I found it in what I considered a dangerous situation, and I intended to have it repaired the next morning. I did not anticipate any immediate danger, as it had stood so long. When I got to Wheeler-street chapel, I did as I usually do in cases of difficulty,—I craved the direction of my heavenly Friend, who will give rest to the burthened, and instruction to the ignorant.

"From that moment I became very uneasy, and instead of proceeding to Hampstead, as I had intended, I returned to Brick-lane. On examination, I saw, or thought I saw, a still further declension of the iron pillars which supported this immense weight; so I sent for a surveyor; but before he came I became apprehensive of immediate danger, and ordered the beer, though in a state of fermentation, to be let out. When he arrived, he gave it as his decided opinion that the vat was

actually sinking, that it was not secure for five minutes, and that, if we had not emptied it, it would probably have fallen. Its fall would have knocked down our steam-engine, coppers, roof, with two great iron reservoirs full of water,—in fact, the whole Brewery.

"How the new year may pass who can tell? I may not see the end of it; but these are the active objects I propose for myself:—

"To write a pamphlet on Prison Discipline.

"To establish a Savings Bank in Spitalfields.

"To recommence the sale of salt fish in Spitalfields.

"To attend to the London Hospital, and to endeavour to make the clergyman perform his duties, or to get him superseded.

"To establish a new Bible Association.

"May the grace of God assist me in these objects; may He sanctify my motives, and guard me from pride, and may I use my utmost exertions, making His will mine."

In February of the ensuing year he published his work entitled 'An Inquiry whether Crime be produced or prevented by our present System of Prison Discipline.' While composing it, he always began his writing with prayer that he might "be guided aright, and that he might do his duty without any regard to self, but simply for the service of God." The work was received with a degree of attention to which he had never aspired, running through six editions in the course of the first year; and a very considerable impulse was given to general feeling upon the subject of which it treated. The work was thus alluded to in the House of Commons by Sir James Mackintosh.

"The question of our penal code, as relating to prison abuses, has been lately brought home to the feelings of every man in the country by a work so full of profound information, of such great ability, of such chaste and commanding eloquence, as to give that House and the country a firm assurance that its author could not embark in any undertaking which would not reflect equal credit upon himself and upon the object of his labours."

Mr. Wilberforce wrote to him on the same subject, and, after warmly congratulating him on the weight it appeared to carry, he adds,—

"May it please God to continue to animate you with as much benevolent zeal, and to direct it to worthy objects! I hope you will come soon into Parliament, and be able to contend in person, as well as with your pen, for the rights and happiness of the oppressed and the friendless. I claim you as an ally in this blessed league."

The good effects of this book were not confined to England: it was translated into French, and distributed on the Continent. It even reached Turkey; and in India, a gentleman of the name of Blair, having chanced to read it, was induced to examine into the state of the Madras jails. He found them in a wretched condition, and did not rest till a complete reformation had been effected.

CHAPTER VI.

1818, 1819.

ELECTION, 1818.—LETTER FROM MR. J. J. GURNEY.—THOUGHTS ON ENTERING PARLIAMENT.—FIRST SPEECH ON CRIMINAL LAW.—COMMITTEES ON CRIMINAL LAW AND PRISON DISCIPLINE.—LETTERS.—DEBATE ON THE MANCHESTER RIOT.

In the spring of 1818, a dissolution of Parliament took place, and Mr. Buxton now offered himself as a candidate for Weymouth. He did not take this step without much prayer for guidance in the matter. "It appears to me," he said, "to be the sphere in which I could do most for my Master's service, but I am perfectly willing to fill a lower place. It is only that I shall be as a common soldier instead of an officer: if I can but serve Him, let Him choose what work I shall do." While upon his canvass, he thus writes from Bellfield :—

"June 4th.

"I think we shall have a contest and a sharp one, and the result is doubtful; however, I am very comfortable, and not at all anxious. If it is right for me to succeed, I do not doubt I shall; and if it is not right, I hope I shall not. I should return to privacy and the dear enjoyments of my own family without disappointment or vexation, and I think personally as well content with little as with great things. Joseph, in our ride from Hampstead to London, mentioned a text which has been a very comfortable companion to me. 'In all thy ways acknowledge Him, and He will direct thy paths.' This text and another, 'Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose heart is stayed on Thee,' are constantly in my thoughts. My continual prayer is, that the Lord would work that termination which his infinite wisdom knows to be the best; which is, I think, very probably praying against my own success."

"June 8.

"I am easy in my mind, leaving the event to Him who knows whether the busy engagements of a public life will draw me nearer to, or separate me further from Him; and who also knows whether He chooses me as an instrument of good; and if He does, He will bring the means used to a successful issue."

Elections at this time presented very different scenes from what they now afford; and, very frequently, the voters were anxious to decide the matter, as Irish counsel used to decide their causes, by fighting it out. This was so much the case at Weymouth, that Mr. Buxton was obliged to entreat his friends to use moderation towards their opponents. "Beat them," said he, "in vigour, beat them in the generous exercise of high principle—beat them in disdain of corruption, and the display of pure integrity; but do not beat them with bludgeons."

Four days before the election terminated, he writes:—

"June 26. 1818.

"I am very nearly sick of the bustle, and my expectations of success are considerably diminished this morning: but this is only my own opinion. I am exceedingly popular with my party, except as to one point. We (that is, the party, for I have had nothing to do with it) have made some most bitter attacks upon Sir —— —— for his conduct in Spain. But when I heard from a private friend of his, that he was quite sunk and wretched, I expressed in my speech yesterday the disdain I felt at promoting my cause by slander, and said, that as he had been acquitted by a competent tribunal, he must be considered as innocent. The violence of my party could hardly bear this, and for the first time they gave some indications of disapprobation. I told them plainly that I would do what I considered an act of public justice, though it offended every friend I had in the town."

To Mrs. Buxton.

"June 29. 1818.

"The election is over. I am now going to the Hall to return thanks to my constituents. And so I am a member of Parlia-

ment. Well, I have not yet wished to decide the matter myself. My only feeling has been, if it is right, I trust it will take place; and if not, I equally trust it will be prevented. I wish you were here to see me chaired. The town is in an uproar. The bugle-horn is at this moment playing, and hundreds of persons are collected on the Esplanade. Everybody has blue ribbons. I hope the children at Hampstead wear them."

Mr. J. J. Gurney writes to him on this important point in his career:—

"Norwich, 7. mo. 8th, 1818.

"My dear Brother,—My congratulations come late, which has arisen from want of time, not of interest. I have seldom felt more interested in anything than in thy parliamentary views. Many years have passed over our heads since I first expressed my opinion to thee, that Parliament would be thy most useful and desirable field of action. My wishes are now accomplished; and, till the Parliament meets, I shall indulge myself freely in pleasing anticipations of thy usefulness and thy success. Not to flatter thee, thou hast some qualities which fit thee admirably well for this station. * * * Nor have I any fears of the effect of a public career upon thy own soul. It is undoubtedly true that so extended a field of action will require at thy hands increased watchfulness and *great fidelity;* but I am sure thy judgment is too sound, and thy heart too much alive to the dictates of plain truth, ever to allow thee to be puffed up for those things in which thou hast a stewardship indeed, but *no fee.*

'Not more than others thou deserv'st—
But God has given thee more.'

"Let the five talents become ten, and the ten, twenty, and let them be rendered up at last from hands pure and undefiled, to Him from whom they came!

"Nothing is more beautiful in the world of morals than the great man in talents, who is the little child in religion. * * * With regard to a political course I have only two things on my mind. I believe that one great object taken up upon safe, sound, and religious grounds, and pursued with unabating and unabatable vigour, is a much better thing for a man of talents, who is willing

to be of some service in the world, than many objects pursued without accuracy, without perseverance, and without effect. Thou wilt, of course, be considered by everybody as the representative of the prison cause. To that cause thou art pledged. But in itself it will not afford thee sufficient scope. I fully believe that thy chief aim cannot be directed to any object so worthy of all thy efforts as the amelioration of our Criminal Code. It is a glorious cause to take up. My monitions are, I dare say, very pragmatical; nevertheless, I shall add one more. Do not let thy independence of all party be the means of leading thee away from *sound Whiggism.* I may shortly express my opinion that there *is a great work going on in the world:* that the human mind, under the safeguard of *religious education,* is advancing to the shaking off of many of its trammels, and many of its prejudices; that society is at present in a state of much corruption, but that, if this work goes on, generation after generation will become more enlightened, more virtuous, and more happy; that *the liberty of truth* will prevail over every obstruction. I consider this progress of the human mind perfectly safe, as long as it takes its spring from the unchangeable and most reasonable principles of the Christian religion. I am sure that these principles must ever prevent, in those on whom they act, any steps towards wicked innovation and licentious change. But let us not admit any check to the progress of true light, whether moral, political, or religious; and let us take especial care to avoid *the spirit of Toryism;* I mean that spirit which bears the worst things with endless apathy, *because they are old;* and with which reason and even humanity are nothing, and the authority of creatures, as fallible as ourselves, everything."

To Mrs. Buxton.

"Hampstead, Dec. 6. 1818.

"* * * I have passed a remarkably comfortable Sunday; after breakfast I sat down to Law's Spirit of Prayer. I wonder why his writings are not more popular; there is about them a warmth and a liveliness of persuasion, combined with a force of reason, which makes them very attractive to me. We then went to Wheeler-street Chapel, where Mr. Pratt gave us one of his best sermons. I dare say any other person of the party

would have complained of their distractions if they had only been as attentive as I was; but compared with myself in general, I had my mind much fixed on the service, and was much struck with many things in the Prayer Book which I have read a thousand times without notice. S. Hoare and I stayed the sacrament, which I entered into more I think than I ever did before. When I returned to my seat, I went through a kind of service of prayer, which I by practice have formed; first for myself, that I may press forward towards the mark for the prize of the high calling of Christ, and that I may be enabled to count all things but loss in comparison; next that I may be led to useful objects—that I may be allowed to do something for the service of mankind; then, that my motives in this may be cleansed and purified, and that I may act as unto the Lord and not unto men. Next for protection and health, and the blessings of this life—that is, if they are to conduce to my good, for I am afraid to ask for anything absolutely. * * * The point, however, which has been all day most upon my mind is a desire that I may work for others in Christ; that is, that His Spirit may actuate me to do what good I can, that I may have the high privilege of being His servant, and that the performance of His will, and not the applause of man, may be the wages I seek. This verse has been very forcibly before my mind,—'Never turn away thy face from any poor man, and then the Lord will never turn away his face from thee.'

"You will hardly believe that, at the beginning of the day, I had a kind of longing for Norwich Meeting. In the shape of religious service, a Friend's Meeting, with Joseph and Priscilla for teachers, is the most congenial to my mind, more so I think than anything else. * * * I saw Mr. Pratt after church, who is in high spirits, and says that a hundred Blacks in Africa are true Christians, and some of them are even missionaries."

"Dec. 9.

"I rode to Upton to breakfast this morning, since which I have been engaged in some important calculations. These, however, have been interrupted by a visit from the manager of the Friar's Mount School. He gives the most satisfactory account of the expenditure of the money I raised for them last year; two new schools have been established, and two, which were about to be given up, are revived. He has formed a plan by which six

thousand children, now uneducated, will be instructed. The money is all that is wanting, viz. 4500*l.*, and I think I shall try. You will suppose I am mad, but this is not the case. Certainly nothing of a charitable nature, in which I have ever been engaged, has given me so much satisfaction as these Sunday Schools; and I feel, I hope, some gratitude for the great favour of being allowed to be an instrument of good to some hundreds of children during the past year. I never think of these schools without pleasure. With dearest love to you and the children, and with a joyful heart at the expectation of meeting you and them,

"Yours,

"T. F. BUXTON."

It will be remembered that at the commencement of the year 1818 he had determined to carry out several plans for the benefit of the poor in Spitalfields, and for other purposes of a similar character. In a paper written on New Year's day, 1819, he enters very fully into the details of his exertions on each of the five tasks he had set himself, not one of which had been neglected. The first of them had been "to write a pamphlet on Prison Discipline," and after alluding to the unexpected success of his work on that subject, he adds,—

"It has excited a spirit of inquiry on the subject, which I trust will do much good. I only hope that what has benefited others has not injured *me*. I cannot render myself insensible to the applause it has received. In my heart, however, I know that it is no work of mine, but that the Lord has been pleased, in great mercy, to make me one of His instruments in this work. Lord, I entreat thee, in this and in all things, to purify my motives, and to enable me to act as unto thee, and not unto man. Oh! guard my heart from the delusions of vanity. Make me to know how frail and powerless I am in myself, and to cherish with gratitude, but with humility, the inestimable privilege of being in any way thy servant."

The paper closes with the following reflections upon the burden of responsibility which he had lately under-

taken. It is interesting to see in what spirit he entered that arena, on which he was for twenty years to fight the battle of the oppressed.

"Now that I am a member of Parliament, I feel earnest for the honest, diligent, and conscientious discharge of the duty I have undertaken. My prayer is for the guidance of God's Holy Spirit, that, free from views of gain or popularity,—that, careless of all things but fidelity to my trust, I may be enabled to do some good to my country, and something for mankind, especially in their most important concerns. I feel the responsibility of the situation, and its many temptations. On the other hand, I see the vast good which one individual may do. May God preserve me from the snares which may surround me; keep me from the power of personal motives, from interest or passion, or prejudice or ambition, and so enlarge my heart to feel the sorrows of the wretched, the miserable condition of the guilty and the ignorant, that I may 'never turn my face from any poor man;' and so enlighten my understanding, that I may be a capable and resolute champion, for those who want and deserve a friend."

Upon first taking his seat in Parliament, his attention was exclusively directed to the different forms of judicial punishment. In the beginning of 1819, he took part in two or three debates upon the subject of convict transport ships, the state of which was proved by Mr. Bennett and other members to be horrible in the last degree; still the reformation of prisons was the subject nearest to his heart.

To J. J. Gurney, Esq.

"Feb. 25. 1819.

"When I last spoke (on the state of convict ships) there was no cry of question, but, on the contrary, marked attention; but alas! most undeserved, for, like a blockhead, I rose, having nothing to say, without a moment's premeditation. This has mortified me, which proves that my motives are not purified from selfish desires of reputation; and that all my anxiety is,

not eagerness for the reform of prisons and the penal code, but, in truth, debased and alloyed by a desire for the reputation of T. F. B. I despise this vanity. On Monday next comes on the question of prisons; on Tuesday, the question of the penal code. On the latter I shall speak with my arguments and facts clearly before me. If I then fail, the failure is final — I may serve the cause as a labourer, but neither this, nor any other, as an advocate — and *we* must be satisfied. I endeavour to divest my mind of too much carefulness about the matter, persuaded that, whatever the event may be, that event is right both for me and for the cause."

On the 1st of March, Lord Castlereagh's motion for a committee to inquire into the state of Prison Discipline, was carried, and on the next evening a motion for a committee on the Criminal Laws was made by Sir James Mackintosh, and seconded by Mr. Buxton, whose speech met with success abundantly sufficient to dispel his fears of uselessness in the House of Commons.

He began by demonstrating that the capital Code then existing was not a part of, but an innovation on, the ancient Common law; that, indeed, the great part of these capital enactments had been made within the memory of man. "There are persons living," he said, "at whose birth the Criminal Code contained less than sixty capital offences, and who have seen that number quadrupled, — who have seen an act pass, making offences capital by the dozen and by the score; and, what is worse, bundling up together offences, trivial and atrocious,— some, nothing short of murder in malignity of intention, and others, nothing beyond a civil trespass, —I say, bundling together this ill-sorted and incongruous package, and stamping upon it 'death without benefit of clergy.'"

His speech, the chief merit of which lay in the lucid and logical arrangement of a large mass of facts, tended

to show that the law, by declaring that "certain crimes should be punished with death, had declared that they should not be punished at all. The bow had been bent, till it had snapped asunder. The acts which were intended to prevent evil had proved acts of indemnity and free pardon to the fraudulent and the thief, and acts of ruin and destruction to many a fair trader."

To J. J. Gurney, Esq.

"Brick Lane, March 4. 1819.

"Well, the effort is over. Last night came on the grand question. I spoke for nearly an hour. I was low and dispirited, and much tired (bodily) when I rose. I cannot say I pleased myself. I could not, at first, get that freedom of language which is so essential, but I rose with the cheers of the House, and contrived to give much of what was on my mind. Everybody seems to have taken a more favourable opinion of the speech than I did. The facts were irresistible; and, for fear of tiring my auditors, I confined myself principally to facts. You will see by the papers that we obtained a victory. As for myself, I hope I did force myself into something like indifference to my own success, provided the cause succeeded."

To the Rev. Francis Cunningham.

"March 4. 1819.

"I made a long speech yesterday, with which the House seemed very well satisfied. I am on both the committees, for prisons and penal law, and so shall have enough to do. I however rejoice that I am in the House, for it is well worth while to sacrifice money, time, pleasure, everything except eternity, to such important objects. I often think of your advice, and wish for more of it. Last night I was meditating upon speeches, compliments, &c., and this reflection rushed upon my mind: 'And what of all these, if I forsake this book, the Bible?' I am writing in a little room full of about twenty members, all talking, so excuse errors, and everything else."

At the close of the debate many of the most distinguished members of the House came up and introduced

themselves to him; Mr. S. Hoare sat under the gallery, watching, with delight, the success of his friend. "I am sure," said he afterwards, "if I had been received in the House as he was, I should not have recovered from the elevating effect of it for twenty years."

But the opinion of an impartial observer may be more valuable. Mr. W. Smith (M. P. for Norwich) writes to Mr. J. J. Gurney:—

"You will see the result of last night's debate by the papers. Buxton acquitted himself to universal satisfaction. The House is prepared to receive him with respect and kindness; and his sterling sense, his good language, and his earnest manner, fully keep up the prepossession in his favour, so that I recollect very few who have made their *début* with so much real advantage, and seem so likely to maintain the station thus early assumed."

If we have dwelt at some length upon the success of this early effort in Parliament, it has not been from any wish to give his speeches more credit than they deserved. Their eloquence was less remarkable than their force; they were deeply stamped with his own character, which, as Mr. Wilberforce once remarked, was that of "a man who could hew a statue out of a rock, but not cut faces upon cherry-stones."

His speeches were not sparkling or splendid; their end was utility; their ornaments, clearness, force, and earnest feeling. He was not one of those orators, described by Lord Bacon, "that hunt more after words than matter, and more after the choiceness of the phrase, the sweet falling of the clauses, and the varying and illustration of their works with tropes and figures, than after the weight of matter, worth of subject, or soundness of argument." He usually bestowed much care in preparation; not in embellishing the style, but in

bringing together supplies of facts, and marshalling them in one strong line of argument. Speaking, as he did, from the heart, and for the most part on subjects which appealed to the feelings as well as to the judgment, he sometimes rose into passages of impassioned declamation; occasionally there was a burst of indignation, and not unfrequently a touch of playful satire; but the usual character of his oratory was a lucid and powerful appeal to the reason of his audience.

In accordance with the motions on the 1st and 3rd of March, two select committees were appointed, in both of which Mr. Buxton was included. The one was to inquire into the feasibility of mitigating the Penal Code, of which he writes, March 11th, 1819:—

"I conjecture that no man on the committee goes so far as I go—namely, to the abolition of the punishment of death, except for murder; but all go a very great way, and if we merely make forgery, sheep and horse stealing, not capital, it is an annual saving of thirty lives, which is something, and satisfies me in devoting my time to the subject. I am confident that our opinions on prisons and Criminal law will ultimately prevail; in short, I am in high spirits on the whole matter."

The other committee was appointed to examine the state of jails throughout the kingdom; and here we may briefly state the final result of the exertions made for the improvement of Prison Discipline. The committee published its first report in 1820, and the government was thereby induced to bring in a bill for consolidating and amending the prison laws then in existence. This bill was referred for revision to a select committee, of which Mr. Buxton was a member.

"You will be delighted," he writes soon afterwards to a friend, "to hear that the Prison Bill is going on wonderfully well, beyond all expectation. I made a speech the first day, stating the principles on which I thought we ought to proceed,

and the committee have subsequently adopted almost all of them; so that I do believe that this part of the business of my life will be done effectually."

After much patient investigation, a bill was prepared by the committee, and immediately adopted by the two Houses of Parliament; and thus the English jails, instead of remaining "the nurseries and hotbeds of crime, the almost inevitable ruin of all who entered within their walls," have become, generally speaking, places where the improvement as well as the punishment of the criminal is attempted. Perfection, of course, is not yet attained; the new system has been of no avail in those prisons where exertions have not been used to enforce it; but no man can read the descriptions of the state of jails, from twenty-five to thirty years ago, and compare them with those of the present day, without being astonished at the extent of the evil and of the reform.

John Henry North, Esq., to T. Fowell Buxton, Esq.

"Dublin, April 14. 1819.

"During the whole of the last Circuit, which is just terminated, I was seized with an inexpressible longing to write you an interminable epistle, but the labours of Nisi Prius forbade, and, now that they are at an end, I have begun to think that, with the whole Criminal law upon your hands, your prisons, penitentiaries, and 'Colony of Antipodes,' you will be better pleased to receive a moderate letter than one of overgrown dimensions. I hope I need not tell you with what exceeding pleasure I read your admirable book, or how delighted I was with the praises that were everywhere bestowed upon it. It has done you infinite honour. The general language applied to it here is, that it is the most interesting book that has been published for many years. I had some satisfaction, too, in observing a few little traits by which the author discovered himself to me immediately. The zeal that your exertions have excited in this country, on the subject of prisons, is really sur-

prising. We have now a society in Dublin, for the improvement of prison discipline, of which I am an unworthy member. Here is a committee of ladies, who visit Bridewell in turns every day, and who have in a very short time effected considerable improvement, and their example has been followed in some of our country towns. At the last Galway Assizes, Judge Johnson, in his charge to the Grand Jury, recommended this plan, and alluded to your book and Mrs. Fry's exertions in terms of the highest approbation. It will gratify you to find that the seed which you have scattered has fallen upon good ground."

Mr. Buxton replies:—

To J. H. North, Esq.

"April 19. 1819.

"A report has reached me that you are likely to get a seat in Parliament. Is there a bit of truth in it? Is there the remotest probability of so joyful an event? Pray do not conceal it from me a moment, for I speak only truth when I say it would materially add to my happiness. I have plenty of acquaintance, but hardly a familiar friend in the House, and this is a very needful thing. I much want some one with whom I can freely communicate, and who would honestly tell me when I am right and when I am in error; and I need not tell you how fully my wishes would be satisfied if we were there together. Perhaps you will like to hear the impression the House makes upon me. I do not wonder that so many distinguished men have failed in it. The speaking required is of a very peculiar kind; the House loves *good sense and joking*, and nothing else; and the object of its utter aversion is that species of eloquence which may be called Philippian. There are not three men from whom a fine simile or sentiment would be tolerated; all attempts of the kind are punished with general laughter. An easy flow of sterling, forcible, plain sense is indispensable; and this, combined with great powers of sarcasm, gives Brougham his station. Canning is an exception to this rule. His reasoning is seldom above mediocrity; but then it is recommended by language so wonderfully happy, by a manner so exquisitely elegant, and by wit so clear, so pungent, and so unpremeditated that he contrives to beguile the House of its austerity. Tierney

has never exerted himself much in my hearing. Wilberforce has more native eloquence than any of them, but he takes no pains, and allows himself to wander from his subject; he holds a very high rank in the estimation of the House.

"And now let me tell you a secret; these great creatures turn out, when viewed closely, to be but men, and men with whom *you* need not fear competition. I again, therefore, say, 'Come among us,' and I shall be greatly deceived if you do not hold a foremost place.

"My line is distinctly drawn. I care but little about party politics. I vote as I like; sometimes pro, and sometimes con; but I feel the greatest interest on subjects such as the Slave Trade, the condition of the Poor, Prisons, and Criminal law: to these, I devote myself, and should be quite content never to give another vote upon a party question. I am upon the Jail and Criminal law committees, and devote three mornings in the week to one, and three to the other; so I am contented, and feel as little inclination, as ability, to engage in political contentions. My body is strong enough, but any stress upon my mind, just now, deranges me instantly. 'Indolent vacuity of thought' is my only remedy; but it is not a very convenient medicine for one who has such a multitude of engagements. How fares the law? Is Ireland blessed with abundant litigation, or does poverty deny this, the chief of luxuries?

"Never mind discouragements. If you live and labour, you must stand in the front of that society in which you may be placed, be it in the Dublin Courts or St. Stephen's. So I have always thought and said, and so I still think and say. I wish you were with us. I know you will be a Tory: you always were one in heart, and your wife will make you still worse: but we will contrive to agree together, for I am not a Whig. I am one of those amphibious nondescripts called Neutrals; but how can I be anything else? I cannot reconcile to myself the doctrine of going with a party right or wrong. I feel with you that my objects would prosper much better if I sat behind the Treasury Bench; but then I must often vote against my convictions; *i. e.*, do wrong that right may come; and I do not feel this to be my duty, even for prisons and Criminal law. Has Wyndham Quin's business made much noise in Ireland? It occupied about a week of our time, and the House were so

amused they would do nothing else. Smith's evidence was excellent, and true; for Gould's there are more appropriate phrases. Plunkett made a speech which did not please the House; it was special pleading, which they hate."

To Mrs. Buxton.

"Weymouth, Aug. 15. 1819.

* * * "I suppose M. has given you a full account of our travels. During the first ten miles I did not quite recover my composure, nor forget the horror I experienced at the rape of my apples. All the remainder of the journey was very pleasant. We read diligently, though with a few intervals for conversation. Our book was Lord Russell's Life. No wonder his friends admired him, and his wife adored him; he was the noblest of all the nobles I ever read of. His intrepidity and gaiety in the prospect of death are unrivalled. A man of the name of Rich, who packed the jury, and thus caused Lord Russell's condemnation, had formerly belonged to his party, and had deserted to the Court. He brought down the death-warrant to Newgate; when he was gone, Lord Russell said to Burnett, 'I felt a great mind to tell Rich (only it is indecent to joke in these matters) that he and I should never sit again together in the House of Commons to vote for the exclusion of the Duke of York.' Perhaps you will not much admire this anecdote, but it is quite charming to me: it shows a mind so entirely at ease.

"Here I am continually in the air, and certainly have already found the benefit of it. I rode this morning for two hours on the Wyke sands before breakfast. I have determined not to canvass, but to be constantly walking about: the worst of it is, I do not know above a third of their faces, and the names of about one in a hundred, so I am in momentary danger of grasping the hand, and inquiring with the kindest solicitude after the welfare of the wife and family of a man who never saw Weymouth before in his life. * * * Weymouth is a striking place in one respect; it brings me into contact with some whose course is nothing short of tremendous, and this trying question always recurs: 'You know better things; by mercy you have been led into other society, and the truth has been discovered to your judgment upon the comparison of this world and eternity;

then is your course as much superior to theirs as your light is—in short, with all the instruction and knowledge given you, are you seeking heaven with your whole heart?'"

In November the riot which had taken place at Manchester, and the severe measures to which the magistrates of that city had resorted, where brought before Parliament. Before the debate Mr. Buxton writes:—

To his Uncle, Charles Buxton, Esq., at Bellfield.

"Nov. 1819.

"I quite agree with you in reprobating the Radicals. I am persuaded that their object is the subversion of religion and the constitution, and I shall be happy to vote for any measure by which the exertions of their leaders may be suppressed, but I fear we shall much differ as to the nature of those measures. I most strongly condemn the conduct of the magistrates at Manchester, and I equally condemn the conduct of the ministers in giving them public thanks; and I think, in justice as well as in common prudence, that wretched affair ought to be strictly scrutinised, and it will be very awkward if it should turn out that these magistrates, having been thanked, deserved to be punished.

"You will believe that I did not pass over, without due attention, your remark—'I shall feel much disappointed and vexed if you do not exert yourself, and I am sure you will give great offence to most of your Weymouth friends.' I think you must know how sincerely sorry I should be to vex and disappoint you, and I am not indifferent to the good-will of my Weymouth friends; but it would be the most contemptible baseness in me, if I were to allow the fear of giving offence to operate on my conduct.

"When I entered Parliament, I determined to allow no personal consideration, of any description, to influence my votes; and on this occasion I do hope I shall not shrink from doing my duty, whatever may be the point to which that duty appears to lead.

"I go to London to-morrow, and I wish you could contrive to come there now. I doubt not we could manage to agree very well, in spite of Radicals and Ministers."

To J. J. Gurney, Esq.

"Nov. 25. 1819.

"I must give you a line to tell you how things have gone on in the House. We have had a wonderful debate; really it has raised my idea of the capacity and ingenuity of the human mind. All the leaders spoke, and almost all outdid themselves. But Burdett stands first; his speech was absolutely the finest, and the clearest, and the fairest display of masterly understanding that ever I heard; and with shame I ought to confess it, he did not utter a sentence to which I could not agree. Canning was second; if there be any difference between eloquence and sense, this was the difference between him and Burdett. He was exquisitely elegant, and kept the tide of reason and argument, irony, joke, invective, and declamation flowing, without abatement, for nearly three hours. Plunkett was third; he took hold of poor Mackintosh's argument, and griped it to death; ingenious, subtle, yet clear and bold, and putting with the most logical distinctness to the House the errors of his antagonist. Next came Brougham—and what do you think of a debate in which the fourth man could keep alive the attention of the House from three to five in the morning, after a twelve hours' debate? Now, what was the impression made on my mind, you will ask. First, I voted with ministers, because I cannot bring myself to subject the Manchester magistrates to a parliamentary inquiry; but nothing has shaken my convictions that the magistrates, ministers, and all, have done exceedingly wrong. I am clear I voted right; and, indeed, I never need have any doubts when I vote with ministers, the bias being on the other side. Did the debate inflame my ambition? Why, in one sense, it did. It convinced me that I have the opportunity of being a competitor on the greatest arena that ever existed; but it also taught me that success in such a theatre is only for those who will devote their lives to it. Perhaps you will admire the presumption which entertains even the possibility of success. I am, I believe, rather absurd; but I hold a doctrine to which I owe—not much, indeed, but all the little success I ever had,—viz., that with ordinary talents and extraordinary perseverance all things are attainable. And give me ten years in age, ten times my constitution, and oblivion of the truth which paralyses many an exertion of mine,

that 'vanity of vanities, all is vanity,' and especially that fame is so, — I say, give me these things, and I should not despair of parliamentary reputation; but to one who cannot bear fatigue of mind, who loves sporting better than glory, who will not enlist under the banners of party,—to such a being fame is absolutely forbidden. I am well content; I cannot expect the commodity for which I will not pay the price.

"So far I scribbled yesterday, and then I went to the levée. * * * The rooms were tolerably splendid; but, upon the whole, I never was less attracted by anything than courtiership, and would not be obliged to attend regularly for all the ribbons of all the colours of the rainbow. At dinner, afterwards, I had a great deal of conversation with the two Grants, Denman, and the Attorney-General, and then I went home with Wilberforce, and spent a most pleasant evening. His family prayers were nothing short of delightful. I hope I shall see him a good deal while I am in town.

"P.S. Bootle Wilbraham (who is a Lancaster magistrate) was defending his brethren in the debate, but did it in so low a tone of voice that nobody could hear him; somebody whispered about, that *he was reading the Riot Act.*"

The following letter was addressed to his sister, Mrs. Forster, whose husband was preparing to go to America, on what the Society of Friends term "a religious visit" to the members of their community.

"My dear Sister, "Earlham, 1819.

"Your letter has been much upon my mind, and has raised a variety of feelings. The first impression was one of much sorrow, that your plans and prospects of home happiness should be interrupted, and for so long a time; but I must confess, I have been speedily almost reconciled to it; that is, I have brought it home to my own mind, and have considered, whether it would not really be the greatest of blessings, if by any means my duty would call me to such a sacrifice, and the call were not to be disobeyed. After all, it is a noble thing—it is the noblest of all things—to be permitted to be a servant of the Infinite Ruler of the world; and how low and earthly is that wisdom which could prefer any delights before the delights of such self-dedication! We know

but few things for certain; but this is one of them; — a promise is given to him, who leaves father or mother, or wife or children, for Christ's sake. How can I mourn then, that William should accept the terms of such a promise? I rejoice that he is counted worthy to suffer for Christ's sake. I have always felt particularly interested with the vision of the man of Macedonia, calling Paul to come over and help him, comparing it with the Epistle to the Philippians. The discouragements at first were so great, and yet the Epistle describes such an abundant and happy produce. Who can tell how many may have eternal reason to rejoice at the obedience of the Apostle, and who can presume to limit the effect which Providence may please to produce by William's visit? We may differ on some points, but not on this — that his call is from above. I am persuaded it has been sought in the right spirit. I believe it is sent in mercy to others — in eminent mercy to him and to you! and I am willing that you should undergo the pains of separation. But, my dear Anna, you must not imagine I am indifferent about this. Let me ask, Have you determined to remain behind? I do not give an opinion upon the subject. All I wish to express is, that you must not stay from motives of economy. * * * Of course, we shall see you before his departure. I will hear of nothing else. With love to you both, and not without thankfulness that there is something of a missionary spirit among you,

"I am,

"Your affectionate brother,

"T. F. BUXTON."

CHAPTER VII.

1820, 1821.

ELECTION. — DOMESTIC AFFLICTIONS. — LETTERS. — CROMER HALL. — PRISCILLA GURNEY. — CORRESPONDENCE. — SPEECH ON CRIMINAL LAW.

At the commencement of the year 1820, Mr. Buxton thus enumerates the subjects which he hoped to accomplish in the course of the year — "First; to assist, to the best of my ability, in Parliament, to amend our Criminal Code; and, secondly, to amend our prisons. Thirdly; to obtain a return of the number of widows who burn themselves at their husbands' funeral in India, preparatory to a law prohibiting such enormities. Fourthly; to establish a fund for supporting the Sunday-schools (on the plan of that at Friar's Mount) in Spitalfields." He then mentions, that his thoughts had been principally engaged upon the Criminal Code, till incapacitated for study by an attack of illness, his health having been indifferent for some months previously.

"Now what a lesson is this," he says, "not to delay preparation for death till our death-beds; till our bodies, weakened and wasted, are unfit for every exertion!

"'Let us work while it is called to-day.' I have prayed for love to God, for faith in Christ, and for the spirit of prayer, constant and warm."

The death of the King, and the consequent prospect of a dissolution of Parliament, occasioned some anxious thoughts. "I have felt some doubt," he says, on the 6th of February, "whether I should stand;" and he

mentions his "eight children" among the reasons against doing so. He adds,

"Lord, guide my heart and will aright, and lead me to determine for the best. Oh that I could from this day offer myself a living sacrifice to the Lord, doing or abstaining, speaking or being silent, spending or forbearing to spend, simply because it was the will of God!

"Oh that I could thus put off the old man and put on the new man! I think the time that is past should suffice me to have wrought my own will; and for the future let me try all things by this standard, 'Is it the will of God?' Oh, gracious God, this is what I would be; but what am I? Is one hundredth part of my time, talents, money, strength, spent for God? No!"

He determined at length to stand again for Weymouth. He was successful, and after announcing his re-election he proceeds:—"I heartily hope I may make some good use of my present privilege, and that some of the oppressed may be less miserable in consequence." From Weymouth he went to Bradpole to see his brother-in-law, Mr. W. Forster, before his departure to America.

To Mrs. Buxton.

"March 11. 1820.

"I came here to-day, and have much enjoyed seeing them. William, however, is grave and low. Now I think he has no right to be low; he barters his present happiness for a price incontestably above its real value, and having made up his mind to change perishable for imperishable, and imperfect for perfect, he ought only to rejoice that he has been wise enough to make so good a bargain. However, the sacrifice is a noble one, for I think I never saw two people more possessing their hearts' content."

To J. J. Gurney, Esq.

"Bradpole, March 12. 1820.

"I have here a full opportunity of learning a lesson of humility. It is very well to do good and to serve one's country,

while at the same moment we are feeding our ambition and gratifying our pride; but what are the sacrifices I make? I may call them sacrifices, but their true name is, the pleasures I enjoy. Here, however, the pleasure and the sacrifice are totally at variance. How truly and exactly do the words, 'They left all and followed him,' convey my view of William's two years' absence from a home, a wife, a boy (not to mention the dear horse, and ducks, and flowers), the very darlings of his heart, all his wishes and desires centering in this spot! Well, I cannot pity him, I am more inclined to envy one who is wise enough to make a bargain so incontestably good. I went to Meeting with him twice to-day; his morning sermon on 'Trust in the Lord with all thine heart, and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths,' was one of the very best I ever heard. But the text is one particularly interesting to me. I return home on Wednesday, and mean to study hard till Parliament meets, having at this time the following subjects in my mind:—The Criminal law; The Prisons; The Police; Botany Bay; The Slave Trade; The Practice of burning Widows in India, by Authority of the English Resident; Lotteries; Colonisation, viz., Land for supporting Schools, and Emancipation of Slaves; The Prosecution of the Quarterly Review by order of the House, for Libels on America:—cum multis aliis.

"So you see, my dear brother, I am likely to be fully engaged—whether usefully or not is at his disposal, who disposes all things; but I am thankful that He has given me a desire (mixed indeed, and polluted, but still a desire) to serve my brother men.

"The race is not always to the swift, nor the battle to the strong; and there are some very few occasions in which labour fails; but labour unactuated by selfish considerations, and solely fixing its eye on the goal of duty, and steadfastly determined to reach it, is, I believe, never defeated.

'His way once clear, he forward shot outright,
Not turned aside by danger or delight.'

"This spirit—high objects—and what is ten times better than either, a mind uninfected by vanity, no eye to self—these together will just accomplish every thing except impossibilities."

Thus far Mr. Buxton's career had been one of almost unchequered prosperity, — as a member of Parliament; as a man of business; as a husband; as the father of a large and promising family, his heart's desires had been fulfilled. His public undertakings were becoming daily more important and engrossing, and his home was a scene of unclouded happiness.

His valued friend, the Rev. Charles Simeon, thus writes to him from Cambridge: —

"My dear Friend, "Jan. 14. 1820.

"Certainly if I should live to visit your house again I shall do it with no little joy, for I do not expect to see in this world a brighter image of heaven than I was there privileged to behold. A sweet savour of love remained upon my spirit for a long time after, and I am not sure that it is quite evaporated yet. But I do not know that I shall not thrash you for supporting the Radicals. I look to you, under God, to be an instrument of great good in the House of Commons; and I would not that you should subvert the influence which your habits and talents are so calculated to command. * * * * * I am no politician; but I feel a regard for you, and seem to think that the more I know of you the more my heart will be knit to you: so you must bear with this impudent letter, from one who is with no common affection,

"Yours,

"CHARLES SIMEON."

But all this happiness was about to be marred by a rapid succession of calamities. Mr. Buxton had been hastily summoned back from the election, in consequence of the alarming illness of one of his children. His eldest son, a boy of ten years old, had been sent home from school unwell, but no suspicion of danger was at first excited; his disorder, however, proved to be inflammatory; and, in the course of a very few days, he sank under it. His father writes in his Journal —

"Thus have we lost our eldest son, the peculiar object of our anxious care; a boy of great life and animation; of a most beautiful countenance; of a most sweet disposition: and, blessed be God, we feel that in the whole event His mercy has been extended to us. We can rejoice and mourn together,—mourn at our loss, and rejoice that without exposure to the trials and temptations of the world it has pleased God to take him to himself. We feel the most certain assurance that he is with God; and we feel persuaded that, if we could but be permitted to see him as he now is, we should never bewail him for another instant. 'He pleased God, and was beloved of Him, therefore, being among sinners, he was translated; yea, he was speedily taken away, lest that wickedness should alter his understanding or deceit beguile his soul.' 'He is gone unto Mount Zion.' If these things be true, and true they most certainly are, can we repine, can we wish to recall him? For myself, my heart's desire and prayer has been, that this event may wean me from the world and fix my heart on God. * * * To-night I read Hopkins' most admirable sermon, 'Death disarmed of its sting.' O God, make me thy servant and soldier, was, and is, my prayer. * * * I went this morning and sat down on the top of the hill above my house; I then prayed for myself, my wife, each of my children, especially Edward, now my eldest son! and Harry; for my servants; for the heathen; for the sanctification of my pursuits; and God grant that my prayers are heard!"

His faith was destined to be more severely tried. The younger children, who were already suffering from the hooping-cough, were seized within a few days with the measles. He writes—

"April 9.

"This week has passed away in great anxiety for the remainder of my flock."

"Sunday night, April 16.

"How wonderful are the ways of the Lord; how sweet his mercies; how terrible his judgments! The week past has been one of the most acute anxiety. Oh! when one affliction flows in upon us after another, may they burst the bonds by which we are tied to earth, may they direct us heavenward, and may we,

having our treasures in heaven, have our hearts there also. * * * * * In myself how much is there of unholiness, of worldliness, of pride, of spiritual deadness! and, for myself, I would only now ask that the Lord would eradicate and extinguish these, at whatever cost, at whatever sacrifice. I have just been out walking, viewing this splendid starry night; what immeasurable mightiness does the firmament display! And when we consider that for all these innumerable worlds there is one Arbiter, one Sovereign Director, can we say aught else than 'Thy will be done? Cannot He who rules the universe decide what is best for the children he has lent me? May I yield to that will!"

The sacrifice was required from him, for in less than five weeks after the death of his son it pleased God also to take to himself the three infant daughters whose illness had excited such deep feeling. On the death of the eldest, a child of four years old, he writes: —

"'Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him.' I had much desired her life, but willingly do I resign her into the hands of the Lord, praying him that he would mercifully make her death the means of turning me more nearly to the Lord.

"Thus, in little more than a month," he adds, "have we lost the darlings and delights of our life; but they are in peace: and for ourselves, we know that this affliction may redound to our eternal benefit, if we receive it aright. * * * How are all our most choice and comely blossoms cut off; how naked do we appear, how stripped of our treasures! Oh, my God, my God! Be thou our consoler and comfort us, not with the joys of this world, but with faith, love, obedience, patience, and resignation."*

"Tunbridge Wells, May 14. 1820.

"We came here with the fragments of our family, on Wednesday last, in hopes that the retirement and peace of this place may recruit the strength of my beloved wife. May God give her every blessing; and, for myself, my prayer is that this trial may not pass away, but may leave a durable impression."

* "Eheu! Eheu!" was the simple epitaph he placed upon the tomb of his four children.

The diary from which this melancholy narrative has been drawn closes at this date; and of the summer, which was chiefly spent at Tunbridge Wells, there are few notices, except that before mentioned of the passing of the Prison Discipline Bill, and an allusion, on the 8th of June, to the Queen's proposed trial.

"Last night came on in the House the great events of the Queen, and I think I never spent an evening to so much advantage as this last. The case is this; we are going into an inquiry which will lay bare the most disgraceful scenes in the Royal family on both sides; the probable consequence will be, the impeachment of the Queen. The nation will be divided, and all the lower orders will be on her side: and the certain consequences, disturbances, riots, and bloodshed.

"These considerations pressed much on my mind, and I called Wilberforce out of the House, and persuaded him to move for a delay of two days, for the purpose of preventing the necessity for such painful and disgraceful disclosures, which motion I seconded in a short, warm, decided, and well-applauded speech; and the whole House were so much with us, that the Ministers were obliged to give way. I have been most warmly thanked by both sides. Brougham said, 'You may live fifty years, and do good every day, but you will never do as much as you have done this night.' In short, the effort succeeded beyond expectation, and I am glad that I was able to persuade Wilberforce to take so decisive a step. He wavered a good deal, but when he spoke, he spoke most beautifully, and at considerable length; his fine fancy played upon the subject."

In the autumn of 1820, Mr. Buxton, who was no longer obliged to give much attention to the Brewery, and greatly needed rest and change, gave up his house at Hampstead, and became a resident, permanently as it proved, in the neighbourhood of Cromer.

At first he resided at Cromer Hall, an old seat of the Wyndham family, which no longer exists; having many years ago been pulled down and replaced by a modern edifice.

It was situated about a quarter of a mile from the sea, but sheltered from the north winds by closely surrounding hills and woods; and, with its old buttresses and porches, its clustering jessamine, and its formal lawn, where the pheasants came down to feed, had a peculiar character of picturesque simplicity. The interior corresponded with its external appearance, and had little of the regularity of modern buildings; one attic chamber was walled up, with no entrance save through the window, and, at different times, large pits were discovered under the floor, or in the thickness of the walls, used, it was supposed, in old times by the smugglers of the coast.

Upon first settling at Cromer Hall he received under his roof Mrs. Buxton's youngest sister, Priscilla Gurney, who was then in an advanced stage of consumption, under which she sank in March, 1821.

This lady was a minister in the Society of Friends, like her sister Mrs. Fry, whom she greatly resembled, in uniting uncommon resolution and originality of character with the most winning gentleness of demeanour. Mr. Buxton had the highest opinion of her judgment and piety; and she exercised, as we shall see, a peculiar influence upon his subsequent career. He thus describes her: —

"* * * I never knew an individual who was less one of the multitude than Priscilla Gurney. In her person, her manners, her views, there was nothing which was not the very reverse of commonplace. There was an air of peace about her, which was irresistible in reducing all with whom she conversed under her gentle influence. This was the effect on strangers; and in no degree was it abated by the closest intimacy: something there was, undoubtedly, in the beauty of her countenance, and in the extreme delicacy which constituted that beauty; in a complexion perfectly clear; in the simplicity and absence of all

To face page 106

From a Sketch by Priscilla Gurney.

CROMER HALL.
1820.

decoration but that of the most refined neatness, which, altogether, conveyed to every one's mind the strongest conception of purity. And these attractions of person were aided by manners which nicely corresponded. * * * No less remarkable were the powers of her mind. I have seldom known a person of such sterling ability; and it is impossible to mention these mental powers without adverting to that great, and in my estimation, that astonishing display of them, which was afforded by her ministry. I have listened to many eminent preachers, and many speakers also, but I deem her as perfect a speaker as I ever heard. The tone of her voice, her beauty, the singular clearness of her conception, and, above all, her own strong conviction that she was urging the truth, and truth of the utmost importance—the whole constituted a species of ministry which no one could hear, and which I am persuaded no one ever did hear, without a deep impression."

Whilst attending from time to time his duties in London, he thus writes to Mrs. Buxton, who had remained at Cromer Hall to nurse her sister: —

"Dec. 5. 1820.

"I am going to dine at St. Mildred's Court,* and, at 11 o'clock, two persons connected with the police come to me, and we go together through all the receptacles of rogues in the east end of the town. It will occupy about the whole of the night, but I think it right to do so. I never was more called into action than this time of being in town, so many objects of great good and importance offer themselves. To-day I have been much interested by the African Institution."

"London, Jan. 13. 1821.

"I wrote a line yesterday just to mention my safe arrival, and to-day I have hardly time for more, for a flood of business has overtaken me. I have an engagement already for every day this week, and next week I shall have to bring forward a motion in the House, which will require some time and thought; but it is the weight and multitude of business which makes me happy. At Earlham I read a piece of Paley's philosophy, which I found admirable. I was quite delighted with the vigour of thought

* With Mr. Fry.

which runs through it, and it gave me a train of thought which lasted almost to Ipswich. * * * I have felt very much leaving you all; but though I should enjoy being with you, I could stay no longer from Parliament with an easy mind, so we must be satisfied."

"Bellfield, Jan. 17. 1821.

"I arrived here safely yesterday, but with an adventure on the road. Just on this side of Andover, about 5 o'clock in the morning, my sweet slumbers were impaired by the coach suddenly coming over with a most noble crash. I directly perceived that I was unhurt, and my first feeling was one of thankfulness. As I was not injured, so I did not feel in the slightest degree hurried or disturbed, though rather anxious lest my books and apples should be lost through the prostrate window; so I first collected these, then I put on my spectacles, then exchanged my cap for my hat, and then ascended through the broken window and got upon the body of the coach, where I immediately delivered a lecture to the coachman on the impropriety of swearing at any time, but especially at the moment of deliverance from danger. We then went in various directions for help, with which, in about an hour and a half, we contrived to place the machine on its legs. My thoughts in the course of the journey had been dwelling on Providence a great deal; and, at the same time, I had been looking forward to future and distant plans, and had been strongly impressed with the recollection that all these might be baffled by the fracture of a linch-pin, or by any other slight cause, under the guidance of Him who rules the minute as well as the great events of life, and had had the text, 'Thou fool, this night,' &c., in my mind.

"I find my constituents in very good humour, but my coming was quite indispensable."

"Palace Yard, Sunday Jan. 25.

"I slept last night at Hampstead, and came this morning to Wheeler-street Chapel, where the service was very unusually affecting and interesting to me. My mind has been dwelling, or rather it has been fixed, on the love and mercy of God. I look upon myself as so signal an instance of his extreme mercy. As for my course of life, in that I have no pleasure and no confidence; I feel that I am halting between two opinions, that my heart is not His, who said, 'Give me thine heart:' that

there is a certain lukewarmness in things spiritual which forms no part of my character in things of much less importance: in a word, I seem to be 'stopping short' of that full dedication of self, which is, not a part, not merely an essential, but the very substance of the Christian character. I see before me a path far nobler than the one which I am treading. I could be an effectual servant of the Lord, directing the talents which he has placed at my disposal to his service (when I say talents, I mean not intellectual talents so much as circumstances, fortune, influence, &c.); and being not in some small degree, as is the case, nor almost, but altogether set upon serving God and man. Well! this is the mercy, that, negligent as I have been, yet He has still permitted me this day to draw near to Him in prayer. He has not rejected me altogether: He has this day permitted me to taste and know how good and how gracious He is; and the difference between the implacability of my own heart and the plenteous forgiveness which is with God, has powerfully exercised my mind.

"I think I never so much longed for you, but every time I do so I rejoice to think I have given you to my darling Priscilla. Do not think I repine at our separation. I am most thoroughly satisfied, and enjoy giving her anything I prize so highly. What a pleasure and a blessing has her visit to us this last autumn been! 'giving thanks always in every remembrance of her' is exactly my feeling. She must not fancy I pity her: I can most truly say I would this moment joyfully exchange situations with her, except that I should not like to cheat her into a bad bargain.

"Then as to——*, what do you think I have felt about her after all my complaints? only unmixed admiration for the good she did in spite of me. I say unmixed approbation of her zealous, unwearied, effectual services. I always strive at one thing, and that is to look at the truth. Passion, prejudice, temper, and twenty other weeds of the earth may have absolute occupancy and direction of my actions, but they shall not, if I can help it, pervert my judgment; and to my judgment her activity and effectuality have been admirable. Still, I think it ought to be a matter most seriously weighed by her, whether it would not be better to execute her objects more mildly, even

* A guest who had lately been staying at Cromer Hall.

at the expense of executing much less. The most attractive of all things is female gentleness, and besides it is the most influential of all things. It has a power which nothing else has upon the ruder bosoms of the lords of the creation. —— does not know how much we require to be soothed and petted and coaxed, and how we are to be led by a thread, when a cart-rope will not drag us. In short, she must not be vehemently good, nor give to feebler brethren like myself a distaste for things which are excellent by her excessive ardour in the pursuit. From every good action there ought to be a double fruit, good to the object in contemplation, and good to the bystanders by example. Now it is very odd I should have run on thus, for I can truly say I have, since we parted, repeatedly scolded and upbraided myself, and only commended her. But I hope your giving her some of these hints, and reading her Pascal on the Art of Persuading (where he shows that, for one man who is subdued by force, ten are allured by 'des agrémens'), may be of use; and so my very kind love to her."

"Hampstead, Jan. 27.

"I have had my hands brimfull of business this last week, but it has not fatigued me as parliamentary business does; there is no stress on the mind, no anxiety, no apprehension that a good cause may suffer by my inattention or incapacity, which is wearisome in Parliament. We had a pleasant dinner party at the Duke of Gloucester's yesterday. I had spent the morning with Wilberforce, who was quite delightful. I begin to think, that of all men he is the most subjected and controlled, and invariably in the right frame of temper. I say 'begin' because he is beginning to share the seat in my mind which Joseph has so long occupied. * * * I shall finish my examination of the boys when I am at Cromer, so let Miss —— tremble. Tell her from me, that I look with unmixed satisfaction to her superintendence of their education; and I am sure, if she give them vigour of mind—'a mind not to be changed,' a determination to accomplish their object by dint of resolution, and an unconquerable fixed will to succeed, she will give them what is worth more than wealth, or rank, or anything else, except one thing, which if they have not, I trust they never will have this energy, because this energy is a great instrument, and, if ill employed, a great instrument of evil."

To one of his little boys.

"Jan. 28.

"I have had a fine gallop this morning on your capital horse 'Radical.' I ride him and Abraham every day, and always as fast as they can go, because I have so much to do that I cannot behave like little Lord Linger. I hope that when you are a man you will be very industrious and do all the good you can. There are a great many poor people who are very sick, and yet have no money to buy food, or clothes, or physic; and there are many more so ignorant that they never heard of the Bible, and think they do very right when they roast and eat their enemies! If you think this is very right, and that it is kind to stick a man on a spit and dress him like a pig, why, don't try to prevent it! But if you think it very wrong, then be sure you do all you can to stop it. Do you know, one good industrious man may do a great deal; and, if you wish to be of that sort, you must begin by being diligent now. But there is a much more important thing than even being diligent, that is being good. I don't much like to bring you a horn, because I am sure you will disturb the hen-pheasants, and so we shall have no young ones."

Mr. Buxton belonged, it has been said above, to the African Institution, the Society set on foot by Mr. Wilberforce and his coadjutors, in order to watch over the law, which with so much difficulty had been obtained in 1807, abolishing the Trade in Slaves between Africa and our Colonies. Having in a great measure effected this purpose, and secured the ostensible acquiescence of France, Portugal, and other nations, in the same measure, the Institution had at length sunk into a state of comparative inactivity.

To Mrs. Buxton.

"Jan. 30.

"I had engaged to go down to Coggeshall yesterday, shoot there to-day, and return to-morrow night; happily, as I think, I got notice of the meeting of the African Institution for to-day, so I put off my shooting excursion. In the course of the

meeting an opportunity occurred, which I could not pass over, of declaring my mind, as to the inactivity and ineffectiveness of the Society. I told them that it was certain we once had the confidence of the country; and it was now certain the public knew little and cared little on the subject. I have often spoken plainly and been condemned by others; a few times I have done so and blamed myself, but in this instance I really felt, and still feel, exceedingly grateful that I did not shrink from the duty. My remonstrance was well received, and a meeting was appointed for Saturday next, at Lord Lansdowne's, of all the members of both Houses interested in the subject, and perhaps it may be a means of great good. I tell all this long story for my dear Priscilla, who exhorted me not to neglect this, the first and most melancholy of all subjects. I thoroughly enjoyed the dear boys' letters, but I can't think that I shall find they know so much as they talk about when I get home. My hands are rather full: Thursday, the Brewery. Friday, Cape of Good Hope Slave Trade. Saturday, Lord Lansdowne's. Monday, Prison Bill. Tuesday, Brougham's Bill on Education. Wednesday, I made a speech to the children in Spitalfields. Thursday, Brewery and Mail Coach. Friday, home! I want two heads, two bodies, and the power of being in two places at once."

"Feb. 3.

"I was quite astonished at Wilberforce yesterday. I had not seen him since my vehement reprobation of the African Institution. Yesterday he was warm to excess; over and over again he thanked me for the boldness and openness of my remarks, and said they had penetrated deeply into his heart."

"March 8.

"I really do earnestly desire to write to you more fully, and to express how much my heart is yours and with you, but how can I? I left the House last night at one o'clock, very hot, and could not get to sleep: up this morning and full gallop to Hampstead; then to the Brewery on important business: then a gallop to a meeting of Daniel Wilson's society for the education of young clergymen, where, among the rest, I saw John and Francis Cunningham; I was quite pleased to see them again. The meeting was highly interesting, and the society seems doing so much good, that I am not sure but I shall to-morrow send

them a large donation. I did not to-day, for I am not fond of doing such things under the impulse of feeling.

"I afterwards saw R., who appeared to me to be doing her duty to her father; and, in my estimation, besides the duty to her father, the habit of doing it, and the credit of doing it, are of the highest importance to her.

"Poor dear Priscilla, how sorry I am that she should have any pain! but she is near the land where neither sorrow nor pain enters, and might with much more reason pity us than receive pity from us. Wilberforce was charmed with her message."

"March 12.

"John and Francis Cunningham came and dined at my lodgings, and we had a very pleasant evening. I almost determined to go over to Harrow yesterday, as John has a lecture for me on the neglect of private prayer. Alas! there is more truth in the charge than he knows, and since I heard his notions as to myself the subject has been much on my mind."

"March 15.

"Wilberforce dined with me on Tuesday last, and was quite delightful.—He gave us a long account of his early life and friends, and said one thing which has much stuck by me. I asked him who was the greatest man he ever knew? He said, 'Out of all comparison, Pitt! but,' he added, 'I never think of his superiority without reflecting, that he who is least in the kingdom of God is greater than he.' Now I see clearly that in this world I shall never be anything but a mere moderate—'behind the foremost, and before the last.' But for this I really do not care. I am, however, thoroughly discontented with my progress in better things, and wonder at myself whenever I reflect on them at all. Did Francis tell you of the lecture designed for me at Harrow? I must and will have it, for I am much inclined to think that my lower state in such matters arises from my neglect of spirituality, and of the appointed method of attaining it. I am in a sad scrape at Weymouth. They are going to have races, 'to the great benefit of the town and amusement of the company—fully calculate on my subscription and William's.' He wrote, acceding, but I have refused, for I feel a scruple against them. My dearest love to you all. Let the boys tell me what I am to buy them as presents."

His sister-in-law's illness was now rapidly increasing. He writes —

"London, March 20.

"As for dearest Priscilla, I neither grieve for the bad account of yesterday, nor rejoice at the more favourable one of to-day. I feel her given to the Lord, and I am sure that He is about her bed, and that He loves her, and that whatsoever shall happen to her will be sent in peculiar tenderness; and in these certain truths I commit her to Him without fear or repining. She is inexpressibly dear to my inmost soul, but I look upon her as a saint already in the hands of the Lord. * * * * I have tried to pray for her, but I cannot. My prayers turn into praises, and my mourning into joy. And, after all, if we lose her, what is it? Let our thoughts range through eternity, dropping only the trifle of the next fifty years, and what can we desire beyond her present state? We are sure that her God whom she served in her strength, protects, cherishes and will guard her from evil in her sickness. If she is destined to dwell in His presence for evermore, will not this satisfy those who love her dearly? I say again, I am satisfied and joyful in her state, and can with unbounded and satisfied confidence commit her to the Lord, and shall be almost glad if you tell her I send no message of hope or fear, neither can I hope or fear."

"March 22.

"On receiving your letter, the first impulse was to set off directly, but a meeting about the Slave Trade to-morrow morning, and a debate about the Slave Trade to-morrow evening; a meeting with Stephen on the same subject on Wednesday; and that of the Sunday School children on Wednesday evening, are reasons which seem to supersede every inclination. On the other hand, I ardently long to see my beloved Priscilla again, and the recollection, that she desired you to tell me that she had something to say to me, weighs in the strongest manner upon me. I would not, on any account, lose whatever this may be, whether of love, or advice, or reproof. Circumstanced, however, as I am, I have determined to wait, at least till to-morrow's account comes."

He soon after left London, and reached Cromer Hall

in time to receive those dying injunctions which his sister-in-law had been so anxious to lay upon him. What these were we shall see hereafter. After her death* he was compelled to return almost immediately to London. He writes thence: —

"I was quite out of heart all yesterday, and could neither speak at the public meeting, nor study at night. However, I was determined not to yield to low spirits, and, by dint of obstinacy, I at length did get to work, and continued till one o'clock in the morning."

A few days later he speaks of "working very, very hard." In addition to the questions of Prison Discipline, Criminal Law, and the Slave Trade, in which he took so much interest, his attention had been drawn, chiefly through the facts laid before him by the Rev. Mr. Peggs, a Baptist missionary just returned from India, to the subject of Suttee, viz. the self-immolation of Hindoo widows. Having collected a large mass of information, he determined to bring it before Parliament; and, in the course of the session, he made two motions on the subject. In his speech on the second occasion he proved that within the last four years, in the Residency of Fort William alone, 2366 widows had been committed to the flames! — that the French, Dutch, and other powers in India had abolished the custom in their territories, while the stigma of its continuance still rested on the British Government; and he showed that, so far from being voluntary, this cruel martyrdom was generally forced upon the unhappy widow, either by superstitious priests or interested relations.

* A letter of Mr. Simeon's on this occasion will be found in page 551. of his Memoir.

Several years, however, elapsed before anything of importance was accomplished in this matter, the question being one which fell within the province of the India House, rather than of the House of Commons.

The Committee which had been appointed in the preceding year to inquire into the working of the Criminal laws had now closed its labours, and Sir James Mackintosh's bill for the abrogation of the punishment of death in cases of forgery, arose from its report. A speech of Mr. Buxton's upon this bill* excited great notice at the time; the drift of it was, to prove that the law, as it stood, was at once inhuman and ineffective: that the severity of the punishment induced judges and jurors to strive for an acquittal: and that the uncertainty of the greater penalty was therefore more readily incurred than the certainty of the lesser one.

"We have gone on long enough," said Mr. Buxton, "taking it for granted that capital punishment does restrain crime, and the time is now arrived in which we may fairly ask, Does it do so?

"It has been tried long enough—we have tried nothing else for the last century. And on a scale large enough—the law England has displayed no unnecessary nicety in apportioning the punishment of death: kill your father, or a rabbit in a warren, the penalty is the same! Destroy three kingdoms, or a hopbine, the penalty is the same! Meet a gipsy on the high road, keep company with him, or kill him, the penalty by law is the same!

"The system, then, having been tried long enough, and largely enough, what are the results? Has your law done that which you expected from your law? Has crime decreased? Has it remained stationary? Certainly not. Has it increased? It certainly has, and at a prodigious rate.† Why, then, your system has failed!"

* May 23. 1821.

† In twelve years crime had increased fourfold.

Only one experimental fact had been brought forward on the other side. In the case of larceny from the person, mitigation had been tried; and the convictions for that crime had increased. But then every other crime had increased in an equal or greater ratio. That is to say, no more had been gained by inflicting capital punishments than by not inflicting them.

"We have done as well without as with the capital punishment. That is, our case is proved. To inflict death needlessly can be called by no other name than that of legal murder.

"Now, at the same period, two experiments were tried. In the one case, we proceeded from lenity to rigour; in the other, from rigour to lenity. Here, then, principle is opposed to principle, system to system, and the result is before us. First, in 1807, forgery of stamps was made a capital crime. And the question is, with what effect?

"By the confession of the solicitor of the Excise the crime has not abated, but the prosecutions have abated to one-half. The Excise was better protected by your former lenity than by your late rigour.

"But another experiment was tried, very different in its nature, and (I rejoice to say) as different in its effects. In 1811 the linen-bleachers came to Parliament * * * praying for a mitigation in the law against stealing from bleaching grounds. That prayer was conceded; in this House cheerfully. In another place acquiescence was granted somewhat in the same spirit in which the satirist describes the deities of old as yielding to the foolish importunities of their votaries.

> 'Evertêre domos totas, optantibus ipsis
> Di faciles.'

And here it was determined to punish these romantic petitioners with the fulfilment of their prayer, and to inflict upon them the penalty of conceded wishes.

"With what effect? * * * To answer this question, I will enter," he says, "into a comparison of which no man will deny the fairness. I will take the last five years during which the crime was capital — and the last five years during which it has

not been capital. Now, if I prove that this offence has increased, but only in the same proportion with other offences, I prove my point for reasons which I have already assigned. But if I go a step farther, and prove that, while all other offences have increased with the most melancholy rapidity, this, and this alone, has decreased as rapidly, that there is one only exception to the universal augmentation of crime, and that one exception is in the case in which you have reduced the penalty of your law; if I can do this, and upon evidence which cannot be shaken, have I not a right to call upon the noble lord opposite, and upon His Majesty's ministers, either to invalidate my facts or to admit my conclusion?"

He then read the official returns of crimes committed in the duchy of Lancaster, whence it appeared that, before the mitigation of the law, this offence had been as rife as the other capital offences; but, since that mitigation, all the capital offences had increased prodigiously*, while this offence had *decreased two-thirds.*

"No man," he continued, "would justify severity for the sake of severity itself, or would love executions in the abstract. We have dispensed with them in one case, and the consequence is, fewer crimes, — greater security to property. Shall we stop there?"

He then adverted to the punishment of forgery: —

"For a multitude of years," he said, "every wretch who was overtaken by the law, without regard to age, or sex, or circumstances in extenuation, was consigned to the hangman. You accomplished your object, no doubt! By dint of such hardness you exterminated the offence as well as the offenders; forgeries of course ceased in a country under such a terrible method of repressing them! No! but they grew, they multiplied, they increased to so enormous an extent — victim so followed victim, or rather one band of victims was so ready to follow another — that you were absolutely compelled to mitigate your law, because

* For instance, stealing from dwelling-houses was a capital offence: it had increased *eleven-fold.*

of the multitude of the offenders, — because public feeling and the feeling of the advisers of the crown rebelled against such continual slaughter.

"Have I not then a right to cast myself upon the House, and to implore them no longer to continue so desperate and so unsuccessful a system; and to lay side by side the two cases — forgery and stealing from bleaching grounds, — both offences only against property — both unattended with violence? In the one we have tried a mitigation of the law, and have succeeded beyond our most sanguine expectations; in the other we have tried severity to the utmost extent — and to the utmost extent it has failed. Well then: are we not bound — I will not say by our feelings or by tenderness for life — but by every principle of reason and equity, of common sense and common justice, to discontinue a system which has so utterly failed, and to embrace a system which has been so eminently successful?"

Such were the results of the experiments made in our own time and country. He furnished others from history. Henry VIII. hanged 72,000 persons for robbery alone; yet Sir Thomas More wonders that "while so many thieves were daily hanged, so many still remained in the country, robbing in all places."

Queen Elizabeth hanged more than 500 criminals a year; yet complained bitterly that the people would not carry out her laws, and was obliged to appoint stipendiary magistrates to inflict these penalties. We find from Strype that the people would not prosecute and the magistrates would not act.

So ill, in these two cases, had the rigorous system succeeded.

He then noticed the happy effects resulting from the relaxation of penalties by King Alfred; and in modern times by the Duke of Tuscany and by the United States of America, and he concluded his observations upon this part of the subject with this remark: —

"Crime has increased in England as compared with every other

country—as compared with itself at different periods. Now what species of crime has increased? Precisely those lesser felonies which are capital now, but were not formerly—which are capital in England, but in no other country!"

He had next to remove a common but false impression that the Criminal Code was part of the Common Law.

He first made quotations from the codes of the Saxons, Danes, and Normans, which were palpably at variance with the spirit of our Penal Code. They were as tender of human life as the Code was reckless in destroying it. He proved this also from Coke, Blackstone, and Spelman.

"It is a fact," said he, "that six hundred men were condemned to death last year, upon statutes passed within the last century."

After showing the hurried and careless manner in which bills for inflicting death without benefit of clergy had continually passed the House, without debate or discussion, he stated his affection and reverence for the English Common Law, and the unwillingness he would have felt to attack it, and therefore claimed "a right to gather confidence and encouragement from finding a friend and advocate in that pre-eminent authority." He continues,

"There is no country in which public co-operation is not important to the execution of the law; but in England this concurrence between the people and the law is absolutely indispensable. It is taken for granted, that he who can, will inform—that the person aggrieved will prosecute. All this is taken for granted, and was justly so taken, as long as public feeling went along with the law; but now a man's life is at issue, and this at once seals the lips of the man who could inform, pacifies the prosecutor, silences the witness, and sometimes even sharpens the merciful astuteness of the judge. In fact and in truth it effects the deliverance of the felon.

"But worse than this, there is a price which we have to pay, of which, if I can prove the existence and extent, no man will deny that in itself it more than countervails every conceivable advantage, — I mean the perjury of jurymen."

After giving a number of instances where juries had clearly perjured themselves in order to save the lives of prisoners,—

"I hold in my hand," he says, "1200 cases of a similar description. Is it then policy or prudence — I say nothing of its wickedness — to tamper with what is so very delicate, or even to permit the reputation of that oath to be impaired, or any stain to be cast upon its purity? But when the public see twelve respectable men, in open court, in the face of day, in the presence of a judge, calling God to witness that they will give their verdict according to the evidence, and then declaring their belief in things, not merely very strange or uncommon, but actual physical impossibilities, absolute miracles, wilder than the wildest legends of monkish superstition,— what impression on the public mind must be made, if not this — that there are occasions in which it is not only lawful, but commendable, to ask God to witness palpable and egregious falsehood?"

Referring to the evidence which had been given by a multitude of persons in very different situations, of very different habits and opinions, as to the pernicious effects of the system of severe punishment upon all classes of society,—

"I ask," he said, "how happens it that persons so various — filling situations so various — merchants, bankers, solicitors of the Excise, shop-keepers, solicitors of the Old Bailey, officers of the police, clerks of the police offices, magistrates, and jurymen — men bound together by no similarity of pursuit, no identity of interest,— by no party feeling, political or religious, — how happens it, I ask, that such persons should

> 'Weave such agreeing truths, or how, or why,
> Should all conspire to cheat us with a lie?'

* * * Shall we accede to this rational solution of the uniformity of their testimony? Shall we not rather conclude that

they all spoke alike because they all spoke the truth, and that the uniformity of the evidence arose from the uniformity of the observation?

"And this opinion of practical men being corroborated by the opinions of men of profound thought and great learning — of Chillingworth, Johnson, Franklin, Pitt, Fox; of More, Bacon, Coke, Clarendon, Ashburton, and Blackstone; I say, when I see that the conclusion at which the wisest men have arrived by dint of reason is the same conclusion at which the most practical men have arrived by dint of experience; and that this, the speculation of the learned, and the observation of those that gather up their notions from the busy scenes of life, has been put to the test in America and in Tuscany, and that there it has realised more than the most sanguine expectation; — and further, that this system is the Common Law of England, and is common sense: — I say, when I have such a body of evidence and argument—of fact and authority—of reason and experience, — and when our adversaries, members of a committee which sat for many months, never once ventured to hint at an authority, or to produce a witness who could gainsay the truth of those doctrines which I am maintaining; — when I have so much in my favour, and so very little against me, I cannot but indulge the hope that the noble lord opposite and the Government will do justice to the country by aiding the milder but more efficient doctrines of penal legislation which we have endeavoured to promulgate."

He concluded his speech thus: —

"My argument then is this. Our system is before us. The price we pay for our system is, — the loss of public opinion, and the aid (the best, the cheapest, and the most constitutional) which the law gathers from the concurrence of public opinion; the necessity of doing that by spies, informers, and blood-money, which were better done without them; the annual liberation of multitudes of criminals; the annual perpetration of multitudes of crimes, perjury, and the utter abandonment of the first of your duties, the first of your interests, and the greatest of all charities — the prevention of crime. This is what you pay. And for what? For a system which has against it a multitude of divines, moralists, statesmen, lawyers, — an unrivalled phalanx

of the wise and good; a system which has against it the still stronger authority of practical men, who draw their conclusions from real life; a system which has against it the still stronger authority of the Common Law of England; which, if wrong now, is wrong for the first time; a system which has against it the still stronger authority of experience and experiment, in England on the one hand — in Tuscany, in America, and elsewhere, on the other: and, finally, a system which, in its spirit and its temper, is against the temper and the spirit of that mild and merciful religion 'which desireth not the death of a sinner, but rather that he should turn from his wickedness and live!'"

Numerous were the expressions of approbation which this speech called forth. Sir James Mackintosh said in the House, that it was "the most powerful appeal that he had ever had the good fortune to hear within the walls of Parliament."* And in a subsequent debate Mr. (now Lord) Denman remarked, that "more of wisdom, more of benevolence, more of practical demonstration he had never heard in the course of his parliamentary career, than was contained in the energetic speech of his honourable friend."

When, however, the division took place on the question, "That the bill for the mitigation of the punishment of death for forgery do pass," the Ayes were 115, and the Noes 121: and the bill was consequently lost!

On the 5th of June, 1822, Sir James Mackintosh again brought forward the question, and was again seconded by Mr. Buxton. They succeeded in carrying by a majority of sixteen the motion, "That the House will in the next session consider the means of increasing the efficacy of the Criminal Law, by abating the rigour of its punishments."

In 1823, however, the resolutions proposed by Sir

* Hansard, May, 1821.

James Mackintosh were rejected, and he and his friends were still struggling against a superior force, when in 1826, Mr. Peel, on his accession to office, undertook the momentous task of remodelling the whole penal code.

An account will be given, in its proper place, of the final result of the movement for the mitigation of that sanguinary code, by which, at the period when first Sir Samuel Romilly, and afterwards Sir James Mackintosh and Mr. Buxton brought the subject forward, two hundred and thirty offences were punishable with death!

CHAPTER VIII.

SLAVERY. 1821—1823.

MR. BUXTON IS CHOSEN BY MR. WILBERFORCE AS HIS PARLIAMENTARY SUCCESSOR. — COMMON CONFUSION OF "SLAVERY" WITH "SLAVE TRADE." — PREVIOUS IMPRESSIONS ON MR. BUXTON'S MIND. — PRISCILLA GURNEY'S DYING WORDS. — HE STUDIES THE SUBJECT. — LONG DELIBERATIONS. — FEAR OF SERVILE REVOLT. — UNDERTAKES TO ADVOCATE THE QUESTION. — LETTERS FROM MR. WILBERFORCE. — REFLECTIONS. — SUTTEE. — THE QUAKER'S PETITION. —LETTER TO EARL BATHURST.—THE FIRST DEBATE ON SLAVERY. —MR. CANNING'S AMENDMENTS.— AMELIORATIONS IN THE SLAVE'S CONDITION RECOMMENDED TO THE COLONISTS. — LETTER TO SIR JAMES MACKINTOSH.

THE evening after Mr. Buxton had delivered his speech on Criminal Law he received the following letter from Mr. Wilberforce: —

"My dear Buxton, "London, May 24. 1821.

"It is now more than thirty-three years since, after having given notice in the House of Commons that I should bring forward, for the first time, the question concerning the Slave Trade, it pleased God to visit me with a severe indisposition, by which indeed I was so exhausted that the ablest physician in London of that day declared that I had not stamina to last above a very few weeks. On this I went to Mr. Pitt and begged of him a promise, which he kindly and readily gave me, to take upon himself the conduct of that great cause.

"I thank God I am now free from any indisposition; but from my time of life, and much more from the state of my constitution, and my inability to bear inclemencies of weather and irregularities, which close attendance on the House of Commons often requires, I am reminded, but too intelligibly, of my being in such a state that I ought not to look confidently to my being

able to carry through any business of importance in the House of Commons.

"Now for many, many years I have been longing to bring forward that great subject, the condition of the negro slaves in our Trans-atlantic colonies, and the best means of providing for their moral and social improvement, and ultimately for their advancement to the rank of a free peasantry; a cause this, recommended to me, or rather enforced on me, by every consideration of religion, justice, and humanity.

"Under this impression I have been waiting with no little solicitude for a proper time and suitable circumstances of the country, for introducing this great business; and latterly, for some Member of Parliament, who, if I were to retire or to be laid by, would be an eligible leader in this holy enterprise.

"I have for some time been viewing you in this connection; and after what passed last night I can no longer forbear resorting to you, as I formerly did to Pitt; and earnestly conjuring you to take most seriously into consideration the expediency of your devoting yourself to this *blessed service*, so far as will be consistent with the due discharge of the obligations you have already contracted, and in part so admirably fulfilled, to war against the abuses of our Criminal Law, both in its structure and its administration. Let me then entreat you to form an alliance with me, that may truly be termed holy, and if I should be unable to commence the war (certainly not to be declared this session); and still more, if, when commenced, I should (as certainly would, I fear, be the case) be unable to finish it, do I entreat that you would continue to prosecute it. Your assurance to this effect would give me the greatest pleasure: pleasure is a bad term — let me rather say, peace and consolation; for alas! my friend, I feel but too deeply how little I have been duly assiduous and faithful in employing the talents committed to my stewardship; and in forming a *partnership* of this sort with you I cannot doubt that I should be doing an act highly pleasing to God, and beneficial to my fellow creatures. Both my head and heart are quite full to overflowing, but I must conclude. My dear friend, may it please God to bless you, both in your public and private course. If it be His will, may He render you an instrument of extensive usefulness; but above all, may He give you the disposition to say at all times, 'Lord, what

wouldest thou have me to do or to suffer?' looking to Him, through Christ, for wisdom and strength. And while active in business and fervent in spirit upon earth, may you have your conversation in heaven, and your affections set on things above. There may we at last meet together, with all we most love, and spend an eternity of holiness and happiness complete and unassailable.

"Ever affectionately yours,

"W. WILBERFORCE."

Many causes had been concurring to prepare Mr. Buxton for entering upon this "holy enterprise." His attention had, at an early period, been drawn, though slightly, to the questions of Slavery and the Slave Trade. In one of his private memoranda he enumerates among the causes for thankfulness, "the strong impression on my mother's mind, transfused into mine in very early life, of the iniquity of Slavery and the Slave Trade;" and he notices a remark which she often made, "while we continue to commit such a sin how can we ask forgiveness of our sins?" He mentions also that he used to ridicule his eldest sister for refusing to eat slave-grown sugar; "but," he adds, "her doing so made me think. Singular, too, that my first speech on entering college was upon the Slave Trade, and my first speech on entering life was at the Tower Hamlets on the same subject."

We have seen that he had become an active member of the African Institution; and although that body devoted its attention to the Slave Trade alone, and did not take up the kindred question of Slavery, yet his connection with it no doubt contributed to turn his mind to the varied sufferings of the negro race.

The reader need scarcely be reminded that the importation of fresh negroes from Africa to our colonies had been declared illegal in 1807, after a twenty years' struggle on the part of Mr. Wilberforce, Mr. Stephen,

Mr. Clarkson, and their distinguished coadjutors; and England had no sooner abolished her own trade, than with characteristic energy she strove to obtain, by persuasion or by purchase, a similar measure from the other European powers. Whilst, however, the British *Slave Trade* had been abolished, British *Slavery*, remained. Though no fresh negroes could now be introduced into our colonies, yet those who had been already imported were still held in bondage. It is singular how often the Slave Trade is confounded with Slavery, even in quarters where such a blunder would be least expected.

There were various reasons which prevented those who had effected the abolition of the Slave Trade from attempting also the emancipation of the slaves*; but we see in Mr. Wilberforce's letter that the latter was a subject which constantly weighed upon his mind, and filled him with painful solicitude.

When Mr. Buxton first entered Parliament, his attention was drawn to this question by a letter from his brother-in-law, Mr. William Forster, who, after describing the interest taken by Mr. Buxton's friends in his efforts for the improvement of prison discipline, expresses their earnest desire that he would "take up another most important and extensive question, the state of Africa, and of the slave population in the West Indies." "The attention and exertions of the wise and good," proceeds Mr. Forster, "have been directed, and, through the Divine blessing, not without much success, towards staying the progress of evil in the abolition of the Slave Trade; but now it is certainly time to turn

* In 1807, Earl Percy (afterwards Duke of Northumberland) proposed the emancipation of the negro children, but without effect.

the mind of the British public towards the situation of those in actual slavery."

Another circumstance, to which Mr. Buxton often referred, had prepared his mind for accepting the profferred advocacy of the Anti-slavery cause. He thus mentions it in a letter dated Oct. 22. 1821:—

"Two or three days before Priscilla Gurney died, she sent for me, as desiring to speak to me about something of importance. The moment she began to speak she was seized with a convulsion of coughing, which continued for a long time, racking her feeble frame. She still seemed determined to persevere, but at length, finding all strength exhausted, she pressed my hand and said, 'The poor, dear slaves!' I could not but understand her meaning, for during her illness she had repeatedly urged me to make their cause and condition the first object of my life, feeling nothing so heavy on her heart as their sufferings."

It was not, however, till after long and mature deliberation, that he accepted the weighty charge involved in Mr. Wilberforce's proposal. Indeed, he does not appear to have fully resolved upon undertaking it till a year and a half after the receipt of Mr. Wilberforce's letter; but he spent the interval as far as his other avocations would permit him, in a close study of the question in all its bearings. In this he was materially assisted by the present of a large collection of books connected with the subject from Mr. Hoare, one of the earliest members of the African Institution.

Many of his other friends encouraged him to enter upon this arduous undertaking, especially Mr. Samuel and Mr. Joseph John Gurney; from whom, as from Mr. Samuel Hoare, he received unremitting assistance throughout the contest against slavery.

What chiefly led him to hesitate in adopting this question as his own, was the fear that the discussion of it in

England might lead to a servile insurrection in the West Indies. He deeply felt the weight of this responsibility, and it was the subject of long and anxious thought. "If," said he, "a servile war should break out, and 50,000 perish, how should I like that?" But even this extreme supposition he met by the consideration, "If I had two sons I would rather choose to have one free and one dead, than both living enslaved." In his first Anti-slavery speech he enters at length into this difficulty, and mentions some of the considerations which had removed it from his mind; showing how often insurrections had been foretold by the West Indians, and, that their predictions had never been fulfilled; and further, that, even were this fear well grounded, the English government ought not to be terrified by it from examining into the infinitely greater evil in question.

He appears to have arrived at his final decision in the autumn of 1822; in the course of which Mr. Wilberforce and Mr. Macaulay visited Cromer Hall, for the purpose of discussing the question with him, and also with Dr. Lushington and Lord Suffield. Then was drawn the first outline of those plans in which each, from this time, took his respective and important share.

Mr. Wilberforce writes, after leaving Cromer: —

"My dear Buxton, "Oct. 5. 1822.

We brought much away from Cromer Hall, but we left there, as I have just discovered, O'Meara's 'Voice from St. Helena.' My dear friend, never I believe, while I remember anything, shall I forget the truly friendly reception we experienced under your hospitable roof. I love to muse about you all, and form suitable wishes for the comfort and good of each member of your happy circle—for a happy circle it is—and surely there is nothing in the world half so delightful as mutual confidence, affection and sympathy—to feel esteem as well as good-will towards every human being around you, not only in your own

house, but in the social circle that surrounds your dwelling, and to be conscious that every other being is glowing with the same esteem and love towards you. I hope it is not profane to say, that when associated with heavenly aspirations and relations, such a state is a sort of little heaven upon earth. My dear friend, never shall I direct henceforth to Cromer Hall without a number of delightful associations. God bless you all,—and so I trust he will. It is quite refreshing in such a world as this to think what a globule of friendship has been accumulated at Cromer from different little drops sprinkled over the sea-side. Give my kind remembrances to Mrs. Buxton, Priscilla, the Hoares, Mrs. Upcher, and indeed to all friends; to Mr. and Mrs. J. Gurney, and my old friend Mr. Hoare; to the Lushingtons and Lord Suffield, whom I hope to know better. Meanwhile,

"I am, ever affectionately yours,

"W. WILBERFORCE." *

A short time afterwards Mr. Wilberforce again wrote, to request that he would visit him at Marden Park to arrange their plan of operations for the ensuing session. He adds: —

"I have often rejoiced of late years in thinking of my having you for an associate and successor, as indeed I told you. Now, my dear Buxton, my remorse is sometimes very great, from my consciousness that we have not been duly active in endeavouring to put an end to that system of cruel bondage which for two centuries has prevailed in our West Indian colonies; and my idea is, that a little before Parliament meets, three or four of us should have a secret cabinet council, wherein we should deliberate to decide what course to pursue."

* The following verses, descriptive of Mr. Wilberforce, were written by Mr. Buxton during this visit, as part of a playful address to a travelling conjuror, named Lee Sugg.

"Farewell, meagre Sugg, we are bound to attend
On a guest who's at once our instructor and friend:
A conjuror too!—even there he will meet you,
And at your own weapons undoubtedly beat you.
A wizard is he—to allure away grief,
To give hope to the sad, to the wretched relief.
And what are the strange incantations he uses,
When sorrow he scatters, and joy he diffuses?
Himself is the charm, his manners are spells,
A conjuring art in his converse there dwells:
There's magic we know—and poor Africa knows!—
In the voice that was raised to extinguish her woes.
We ken not the potions and drugs which he blends,
But we're sure he's the power of enchanting his friends!"

Mr. Macaulay and Mr. Buxton accordingly arrived at Marden Park on the 8th of January; and (in the words of the biographers of Mr. Wilberforce) "long and deep were their deliberations, how best to shape those measures which were to change the structure of society throughout the Western World."*

It is pleasing to observe the spirit in which Mr. Buxton entered upon that session of Parliament, in which he was to commence his arduous Anti-slavery career. In his Commonplace book, after lamenting that "he was making no advance in spiritual things," he proceeds: —

"Has not my time been squandered in unworthy objects for one who has but a short time to prepare himself for immortality; for one who sees before him so much misery and so much vice, and who feels that labourers only are wanting to abate both the misery and the vice? I am sure that we live in days in which a strenuous advocate of what is right is nearly certain of success. I have no reason for despondence. The Prison cause and the Criminal Law cause have both signally prospered. Grant, O Lord God, that I may not spend my money for that which is not bread, and my labour for that which satisfieth not; but that I may choose for my first objects those which merit the dedication of all my powers, possessions, energies, and influence. Now, what are the objects thus deserving? The salvation of my own soul and the service of God, promoting the salvation of others and their welfare.

"O for that spirit of devotion, of gratitude, of love to Christ, of indifference to the world, which the Lord gave me in my illness! Let me then never pass a day without serious and repeated prayer — that is indispensable. Let me renounce the world as much as possible; as much as possible acknowledge God in all my ways and words, and let me manfully resist every temptation which may assault and endanger my soul. O God, grant these things through thy blessed Son! Next, how can I promote the welfare of others? *In private*, by more seriousness

* Life of Wilberforce, vol. v. p. 160.

in family devotions, and by much more command of temper; by more industry; by more economy, sparing on my own pleasure and expending on God's service. *In public*, by attending to the Slave Trade, Slavery, Indian widows burning themselves*, the completion of those objects which have made some advance, viz., Criminal Law, Prisons, and Police. Send thy blessed Spirit, O great God, to my aid, and for my guidance, that, renouncing sin, I may walk worthy of my high vocation, in and through Jesus Christ my Lord."

To Mrs. Upcher, at Sheringham, near Cromer.

"London, Feb. 1823.

"My hands are entirely full with slaves, Indian widows, and the beer question; and with the Spanish ambassador, who is coming to dinner. How far, how very far, do I prefer Cromer and its neighbourhood to this big town! If I had my choice, and could exactly think it right to follow my own inclination, I should soon be disqualified for franking. As for fame, 'that last infirmity of noble minds,' it is not much of an infirmity of mine. To be sure I get but little of it, and that very little I care as little about; but then Indian widows and Slavery,—these are subjects worth any sacrifices: so no grumbling, in which I was going to indulge."

To John Henry North, Esq.

(After congratulating him warmly on his success at the Irish bar):—

"Feb. 13.

"Now get into Parliament, and be wise enough to come there absolutely independent. * * * Come into Parliament, and join

* He had been encouraged to hope that this question would be taken up by the ministers. He writes in 1822: "I am highly gratified to find that Government have some notion of taking up the subject of my Indian widows. That *would* be delightful."

These hopes proved to be unfounded; and on the 18th of June, 1823, he again brought the subject formally before the House, but without success. Soon afterwards he says, in a note to a friend, "I have been seeing the Governor of India this morning, about the annual immolation of thousands of poor widows. I do, from the bottom of my heart, wish that he, and such as he, felt as much about them as I do." From time to time he brought the subject before the House of Commons, remarking on the culpability of Government in continuing to countenance this atrocious custom. The result will be given in a subsequent part of this narrative.

us with all your force on such subjects as the abolition of the Slave Trade and of Slavery, the improvement of the Criminal Law and Prisons, the advancement of civilisation and Christianity in India. Make these and such as these your objects, and you will do vast service to mankind, to yourself, and to your friends. I do not mean, however, that these should prevent you from advancing in your own pursuits. I firmly believe that they will promote your welfare, taking welfare in the most worldly sense."

To the same, soon afterwards.

"I presume you have seen that the great subject of slavery has fallen into my hands. I count on you as an assured coadjutor. Will you accept a few pamphlets, by way of brief, and some for circulation among persons of influence! How heartily and continually I wish you were with me in the House! If it does not suit you, and if you do not suit it, I will give up all claims to the gift of prophecy."

To his eldest Son.

"My dear Boy, "March 20.

"I was very glad to receive your letter. I hear that you are very attentive to dear mamma when you ride with her: that is right. * * * You may tell her that I did not speak last night; nobody replied to Wilberforce about the slaves, so I had no opportunity of saying anything. I am glad your gardens are so nice and neat and beautiful. I quite long to see you all, and find it rather hard to be kept away; but I am very busy, working hard for the poor slaves. How glad I shall be to hear you make a speech, when you are a man, in their favour!

"How are the pheasants, and the baby, and the rats, and the ponies, and all the other animals? Love to you all."

To Mrs. Buxton.

"March 22.

"Wednesday is the very earliest day I can be down with you, and it requires all my energy and determination to keep to that. This minute Wilmot, Under-Secretary of State, has been here, desiring me to call on Lord Bathurst on Wednesday relative to my Slave bill. * * * I am very earnest about Slavery; it seems to me that this is to be the main business of my life,—this and Hindoo widows; I am well contented and want no

other business. How odd the transitions of the human mind are!—how occupied mine was with pheasants and partridges till I left Norfolk! and I firmly believe I have not thought of them five times during my whole stay in London; but they certainly occupied too much of my time in the autumn. You cannot think how affectionate and loving Wilberforce was when I called on him yesterday. I think it odd that we should suit so well, having hardly one quality in common."

Anti-slavery operations were now commenced with vigour, and for some time all went on well. Dr. Lushington, Lord Suffield, and several others, who had taken a prominent part in the reformation of Prison Discipline, now threw all their energies into this new undertaking. Early in March Mr. Wilberforce published his well-known "Appeal on behalf of the slaves." At about the same time the Anti-Slavery Society was formed (Mr. Buxton being appointed a Vice-President), and the Committee engaged warmly in the task of collecting evidence and spreading information through the country. Public feeling was soon roused into activity, and petitions began to flow in; the lead was taken by the Society of Friends, and it was determined that the presentation of their appeal by the hands of Mr. Wilberforce should be the opening of the parliamentary campaign. He introduced it by saying that a similar petition which he had had the honour of presenting nearly thirty years before, had been the first effort against the kindred iniquity of the Slave Trade, and that in presenting this one "he considered that the first stone was laid of an edifice which would stand at some future period, an ornament to the land."

Mr. Canning asked whether it was his intention to found any motion upon it? Mr. Wilberforce said, "It was not, but that such was the intention of an esteemed friend of his."

Mr. Buxton then gave notice that on the 15th of May "he would submit a motion, that the House should take into consideration the state of slavery in the British Colonies." *

A few weeks before his motion came on, he communicated his intentions to the Government in the following letter addressed to Mr. Wilmot Horton for the perusal of Earl Bathurst: —

"My dear Sir, "Spring Gardens Hotel, April 15. 1823.

"A severe indisposition is, I think, some, though a poor, apology for not having performed my promise of writing to you.

"On the subject of the line I shall take about slavery, I must confess that my views are not absolutely determined, but such as they are I will state them. You will not, however, consider me absolutely and closely bound to them.

"The subject divides itself into two parts:—the condition of the existing slaves, and the condition of their children.

"With regard to the former, I wish the following improvements:—

"1. That the slaves should be attached to the island, and, under modifications, to the soil. 2. That they cease to be chattels in the eye of the law. 3. That their testimony be received 'quantum valeat.' 4. That when any one lays his claim to the services of a negro, the *onus probandi* should rest on the claimant. 5. That obstructions to manumission should be removed. 6. That the provisions of the Spanish law (fixing by competent authority the value of the slave, and allowing him to purchase a day at a time) should be introduced. 7. That no governor, judge, or attorney-general should be a slave-owner. 8. That an effectual provision should be made for the religious instruction of the slaves. 9. That marriage should be sanctioned and enforced. 10. That the Sunday should be devoted by the slave to repose and religious instruction; and that other time should be allotted for the cultivation of his provision-grounds. 11. That some measures (but what I cannot say)

* Hansard, vol. viii. p. 627.

should be taken to restrain the authority of the master in punishing his slaves; and that some substitute be found for the driving system.

"These are the proposed qualifications of the existing slavery; but I am far more anxiously bent upon the extinction of slavery altogether, by rendering all the Negro children, born after a certain day, free: for them it will be necessary to provide education.

"God grant that his Majesty's ministers may be disposed to accomplish these objects, or to permit others to accomplish them!"

In reply to an urgent request for delay, he again writes to Mr. Wilmot Horton: —

"May 10.

"Your letter really gives me great pain. I do not like to refuse anything you ask. I do not like to appear obstinate; but the opinion of all the persons with whom I act is strongly opposed to any delay, in which opinion I as strongly concur.

"The more the subject opens upon me, the more do I think that I should be answerable for a great crime if I consented to let the session slip away without proposing something. In short, pray excuse me for saying that on Wednesday I *will* bring forward my motion."

On the 15th of May he wrote to Mrs. Upcher: —

"In five minutes I start for the House. I hope to begin at five o'clock. I am in good health, in excellent spirits, with a noble cause, and without fear. If I am only given a nimble tongue, we shall do."

Then took place the first debate on the subject of Negro Slavery. Mr. Buxton began it by moving a resolution, "That the state of slavery is repugnant to the principles of the British Constitution and of the Christian Religion; and that it ought to be gradually abolished throughout the British Colonies with as much expedition as may be found consistent with a due regard to the well-being of the parties concerned."

In his opening speech he plainly declared "The

object at which we aim is the *extinction of slavery* — nothing less than the extinction of slavery,—in nothing less than the whole of the British dominions: not, however, the rapid termination of that state; not the sudden emancipation of the negro; but such preparatory steps, such measures of precaution, as, by slow degrees, and in a course of years, first fitting and qualifying the slaves for the enjoyment of freedom, shall gently conduct us to the annihilation of slavery."

When we observe these words, and the propositions embodied in Mr. Buxton's letter to Earl Bathurst, we cannot help feeling astonished that the Abolitionists should have been so long and so severely blamed for having rashly set the slaves free before they had fitted them for freedom; whereas, it was the Abolitionists who desired to approach emancipation by a long series of preparatory measures. It was the planters, as the sequel will prove, who rejected these preparatory measures, because they were meant to pave the way to ultimate emancipation.

The plan unfolded in Mr. Buxton's speech exactly corresponded with that contained in his letter to Mr. Wilmot Horton; but he especially urged the importance of emancipating all the children of the slaves; pointing out how surely, yet silently, the curse of slavery would thus die away. He proved that this had been done in other countries, without that noise and tumult with which his opponents predicted that it would be attended. This change was, in fact, at that very time silently proceeding in Ceylon, Bencoolen, and St. Helena.

"Now, one word," he said, "as to the right of the master. There are persons whose notions of justice are so confused and confounded by slavery, as to suppose that the planter has some-

thing like an honest title to the person of the slave. We have been so long accustomed to talk of 'my slave,' and 'your slave,' and what he will fetch, if sold—that we are apt to imagine that he is really *yours or mine*, and that we have a substantial right to keep or sell him. Then let us just for a moment fathom this right. Here is a certain valuable commodity, and here are two claimants for it — a white man and a black man. Now, what is the commodity in dispute? The body of the black man. The white man says, 'it is mine,' and the black man, 'it is mine.' Now the question is, if every man had his own, to whom would the black body belong? The claim of the black man is just this — Nature gave it him — he holds it by the grant of God. That compound of bone and muscles is his, by the most irreproachable of all titles — a title which admits not, what every other species of title admits, a suspicion of violence, or fraud, or irregularity. Will any man say he came by his body in an illegal manner? Does any man suspect he played the knave and purloined his limbs? I do not mean to say that the negro is not a thief—but he must be a very subtle thief indeed if he stole even so much as his own little finger.

"At least you will admit this. The negro has a pretty good *primâ facie* claim to his own person. If any man thinks he has a better—the *onus probandi* rests with him. Then we come to the claim of the white man. What is the foundation of your right? It shall be the best that can be possibly conceived. You received him from your father — very good. Your father bought him from a neighbouring planter — very good. That planter bought him of a trader in the Kingston Slave Market, and that trader bought him of a man-merchant in Africa. So far you are quite safe! How did the man-merchant acquire him? *He stole him*, he kidnapped him. The very root of your claim is robbery, violence, inconceivable wickedness. If anything on earth was ever produced by evidence, it was proved by the Slave Trade Committee that the method of obtaining slaves in Africa was robbery, man-stealing, and murder. Your pure title rests on these sacred foundations. If your slave came direct from Africa, your right to his person is absolutely nothing. But your claim to the child born in Jamaica is (if I may use the expression) less still. The new-born infant has done, can have done, nothing to forfeit his right to freedom. And to talk

about rights, justice, equity, and law as connected with slavery, is downright nonsense. If we had no interest in the case, and we were only speaking of the conduct of another nation, we should all use the same language; and we should speak of slavery as we now speak of slave-trading — that is, we should call it rank, naked, flagrant, undisguised injustice.

"Now, sir, observe the moderation with which we proceed. We say, 'Make no more slaves, desist from that iniquity; stop, abstain from an act, in itself as full of guilt, entailing in its consequences as much of misery, as any felony you can mention.' We do not say, 'Retrace your steps,' but 'stop.' We do not say, 'Make reparation for the wrong you have done;' but 'do no more wrong; go no further; complete what you have commenced; screw from your slave all that his bones and his muscles will yield you,—only stop there:' and when every slave now living shall have found repose in the grave, then let it be said that the country is satiated with slavery, and has done with it for ever."

An animated debate ensued, and Mr. Canning moved and carried certain amendments to Mr. Buxton's resolution; the most important of which was the insertion of the words, "with a fair and equitable consideration of the interests of private property." Plausible as this addition seemed, the Anti-slavery party feared, and, as we shall see, but too justly, that it would afford the West Indians a handle on future occasions; but the discussion grew warmest when Mr. Canning brought forward his plan, that the proposed amelioration should be suggested to the colonial legislatures, but should only be enforced in the island of Trinidad, which being one of the crown colonies had no legislature of its own, with the further condition, however, that any unexpected resistance to the suggestions should be met by authority.

The following were the resolutions carried by Mr. Canning, to which we shall have frequent occasion to

refer in detailing the proceedings during the subsequent ten years.

1st. "That it is expedient to adopt effectual and decisive measures for ameliorating the condition of the slave population in his Majesty's colonies.

2nd. "That, through a determined and persevering, but at the same time judicious and temperate enforcement of such measures, this House looks forward to a progressive improvement in the character of the slave population, such as may prepare them for a participation in those civil rights and privileges which are enjoyed by other classes of his Majesty's subjects.

3rd. "That this House is anxious for the accomplishment of this purpose, at the earliest period that shall be compatible with the well-being of the slaves themselves, with the safety of the colonies, and with a fair and equitable consideration of the interests of private property."

The debate concluded with a reply from Mr. Buxton, which is mentioned by Mr. Wilberforce as having been "short and, not sweet indeed, but excellent." * We will give one extract from it.† It was in answer to the argument that the danger arose, not from slavery itself, but from the discussion of slavery in the House.

"What then!" he exclaimed, "does the slave require any hint from us that he is a slave, and that slavery is of all conditions the most miserable? Why, sir, he hears this, he sees it; he feels it, too, in all around him. He sees his harsh, uncompensated labour; he hears the crack of the whip; he feels — he writhes under the lash. Does not this betray the secret?

> "'This is no flattery; these are counsellors
> That feelingly persuade him what he is.'

He sees the mother of his children stripped naked before the gang of male negroes and flogged unmercifully; he sees his children sent to market, to be sold at the best price they will fetch; he sees in himself, not a man, but a thing — by West

* Life, vol. v. p. 178.
† Hansard's Debates. New Series, vol. ix. p. 358.

Indian law a chattel, an implement of husbandry, a machine to produce sugar, a beast of burden! And will any man tell me that the negro, with all this staring him in the face, flashing in his eyes, when he rises in the morning and when he goes to bed at night—never dreams that there is injustice in such treatment till he sits himself down to the perusal of an English newspaper, and there, to his astonishment, discovers that there are enthusiasts in England who from the bottom of their hearts deplore and abhor all negro slavery? There are such enthusiasts; I am one of them; and while we breathe we will never abandon the cause, till that thing — that chattel—is reinstated in all the privileges of man!"

Although the emancipation of children was lost, and even the alleviations of the slaves' condition were not to be compulsory, yet this debate was an important step gained; and Mr. Buxton's emphatic words in his opening speech were verified: — "A few minutes ago was commenced that process which will conclude, though not speedily, in the extinction of slavery throughout the British dominions."

Mr. Buxton had various communications with Mr. Canning after the debate, and especially one long interview in company with Mr. Wilberforce and Mr. William Smith. On this important occasion, for which he had carefully prepared, he thoroughly ascertained Mr. Canning's opinions, on all points connected with the treatment, present and prospective, of colonial slaves. He then wrote down what had passed, and submitted the statement to Mr. Canning. The document strikingly displays the laborious accuracy and the sturdy determination to verify every point of his case, which characterised his conduct throughout the entire contest. Mr. Canning returned the paper with many autograph notes upon it, and Mr. Buxton therefore exactly knew what were the ministers' intentions at this period. Neither

party, however, were as yet aware of the difficulties of the case.

In accordance with the Resolutions of the House, at the end of May, Circular Letters were addressed by the Government to the various colonial authorities, recommending them to adopt the following reforms: —

1. To provide the means of religious instruction and Christian education for the slave population.
2. To put an end to markets and to labour on the Sunday, and, instead of Sunday, to allow the negroes equivalent time on other days for the cultivation of their provision grounds.
3. To protect the slaves by law in the acquisition and possession of property, and in its transmission by bequest or otherwise.
4. To legalise the marriages of slaves, and to protect them in the enjoyment of their connubial rights.
5. To prevent the separation of families by sale or otherwise.
6. To restrain generally the power, and to prevent the abuse, of arbitrary punishment at the will of the master.
7. To abolish the degrading corporal punishment of females.
8. To admit the testimony of slaves in courts of justice.
9. To prevent the seizure of slaves detached from the estate or plantation to which they belonged.
10. To remove all the existing obstructions to manumission, and to grant to the slave the power of redeeming himself and his wife and children at a fair price.
11. To abolish the use of the driving whip in the field, either as an emblem of authority, or as a stimulus to labour.
12. To establish Savings Banks for the use of the slaves.

Surely there was good ground for anticipating that the Colonial Assemblies would gladly listen to these temperate and salutary suggestions.

While anxiously awaiting the result, Mr. Buxton deliberately weighed the propriety of accepting an invitation from Lord Huntingdon to visit the West Indies in

person; but when this plan was referred to Mr. Wilberforce he gave a most decided opinion against it.*

Sir James Mackintosh had not hitherto taken any part in this question; and Mr. Buxton, being extremely anxious to engage his brilliant abilities and benevolent heart in its favour, addressed the following letter to him: —

"My dear Sir James, "Cromer Hall, Nov. 30. 1823.

"Your letter reached me just as I was leaving town. I much regret that I was thus prevented from talking with you on Criminal Law and Colonial Reform. The latter of these very much occupies my mind. I feel that a question of greater magnitude, affecting the happiness of a larger number of persons, has seldom been agitated; and I also feel that the crisis has arrived, in which we must either begin to ameliorate the condition of the slaves, and, indeed to strike a blow at slavery, or in which slavery will be more firmly established than ever. I am, however, I must confess, alarmed, not at the reproach which is heaped on me, nor at the danger *said* to be produced in the West Indies by my motion. I disregard the former, and utterly disbelieve the latter: but I am alarmed at the prodigious strength of the West Indian party, and at the inability of the person to whom the cause of seven hundred thousand human beings is committed. How often have I wished that that good cause were blessed with the *full, hearty*, unreserved co-operation of yourself! * * * If I have to fight the battle without such aid, the cause of justice and humanity will undoubtedly suffer

* Mr. Buxton could not, as yet, have been aware of the reception which his proposed reforms would meet with in the West Indies, and the deadly hostility with which their author would be regarded, or he would not have entertained for an instant the idea of this visit. Capt. Studholme Hodgson, of the 19th Foot, in his work called "Truths from the West Indies," after mentioning "the volumes of abuse lavished upon Sharpe, Wilberforce, Lushington, Stephen, Buxton, and Admiral Fleming," continues:— "This enmity seems to be more deadly towards the two latter than even that entertained for the others; and I will undertake to say, that were these two gentlemen to arrive in any island in the West Indies, and venture to move out unsurrounded by a guard of those grateful beings, who, night and day, implore blessings upon them, they would inevitably be torn to pieces by the Europeans, who would all vie as to who could most mangle their bodies."— (P. 190.)

from the feebleness of its advocate. With that aid, and with that of Brougham, of whom we are sure, I doubt not that the sons of the present slaves will be raised to a state of villeinage, and their grandsons will be freemen. * * * Now I have written this I am ready to tear it to pieces, and to wonder at my own presumption in having written it. It shall however go. It is an entreaty for more than half a million of human beings who cannot supplicate for themselves, and against whom there are many who can canvass and are canvassing stoutly."

All his letters to Mr. Wilberforce have been destroyed; an unfortunate circumstance, for their number and interest are attested by those of Mr. Wilberforce to himself, which still remain. One of the latter, dated December 27. 1823, appears to be a reply to Mr. Buxton's account of the laborious study of documents which occupied him during that winter.

"My dear Friend,—Excellent! Excellent! I highly approve of your practice. Of course I approve with one understood condition, that you endeavour to bear the apostle's precept in mind,—'Whatsoever ye do, in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus.' This will be rendering your slavery studies 'Exercises unto Godliness.' But otherwise I assure you I have found books steal away my heart from the *Sursum Corda* habit (spirituality of mind I mean, living among invisibles) more than worldly business. Excuse this hint; it is prompted by true friendship. You greatly disparage your faculties. If you require more time to imprint things in your mind, it is because you cut the letters deeply. Alas! I know from experience, that superficial engraving is too often and too easily effaced."

CHAPTER IX.

SLAVERY. 1823—1826.

EXCITEMENT IN THE WEST INDIES.—THE NEGROES REFUSE TO WORK. — SEVERE MEASURES. — DEATH OF THE MISSIONARY SMITH. — THE ABOLITIONISTS BITTERLY REPROACHED. — MR. BUXTON'S PLAN. — INTERVIEWS WITH MR. CANNING. — POPULAR CLAMOURS. — THE GOVERNMENT DRAWS BACK. — ANXIETIES AND DOUBTS. — LETTER FROM MR. J. J. GURNEY.—THE DEBATE.—THE GOVERNMENT GIVES WAY. — MR. BUXTON ATTACKS THEM. — ENCOURAGEMENTS FROM MR. WILBERFORCE.—MR. BROUGHAM'S SPEECH ON SMITH'S CASE.— ITS EFFECT ON THE COUNTRY. — MR. WILBERFORCE RETIRES. — THE SMALL NUMBER OF ABOLITIONISTS IN PARLIAMENT. — DR. LUSHINGTON. — MR. MACAULAY. — MR. BUXTON'S POLICY. — FREE PEOPLE OF COLOUR.—TREATMENT OF MR. SHREWSBURY.—DEBATE. — DELIBERATIONS. — THE LONDON PETITION. — MR. DENMAN'S MOTION. — A YEAR'S PAUSE.

THE news of Mr. Buxton's attack on what the planters considered to be their just rights, and of the acquiescence of the Government in his principles, were received in the West Indies with the most vehement indignation.* For some weeks after the arrival of the despatches, not the slightest restraint seems to have been put on the violence of their rage, which drove them to the wildest designs. Thoughts were openly entertained of resisting the innovations of the Government by force of arms. It was even proposed to throw off the yoke of the mother country, and place themselves under the protection of America. They could find no language sufficiently bitter to express their rancour †; and the colo-

* To the honour, be it said, of the Islands of Grenada, St. Vincent's and St. Christopher's, they did not join in the outcry raised by the generality of the West Indian Islands.

† The following extract from the Jamaica Journal is a specimen of the

nial legislatures unanimously refused submission to the recommendations of the Government.

When the Order in Council reached Demerara, the authorities of the colony endeavoured to conceal the intelligence from the black population. Their precautions were worse than useless; exaggerated rumours soon spread abroad. The negroes fancied that "the great King of England" had set them free, and that the planters had suppressed his edict; and under this impression the slaves on several estates refused to work. Compulsion was resorted to — they resisted, and commenced outrages on the property and persons of the whites. Martial law was proclaimed, and the soldiers called out.

Destitute alike of organisation, of leaders, and of arms, the slaves were at once reduced to subjection. In performing this duty not one soldier was killed; but pressed down and running over was the measure of vengeance dealt to the unhappy negroes.

"It was deemed fitting," said Mr. Brougham, "to make tremendous examples of them. Considerably above a hundred fell in the field, where *they* did not succeed in putting one soldier to death. A number of the prisoners, also, it is said, were hastily drawn out at the close of the affray and shot. How many in the whole have since perished by sentences of the court does not appear, but by the end of September forty-seven had been executed. A more horrid tale of blood yet remains to be told. Within the short space of a week ten were torn in pieces by the lash; some of these had been condemned to six

abuse lavished upon Parliament, Mr. Canning, Earl Bathurst, and "those canting hypocritical rascals," the Abolitionists. (No. 11, Saturday, June 28. 1823.) . . . "We will pray the Imperial Parliament to amend their origin, which is bribery; to cleanse their consciences, which are corrupt; to throw off their disguise, which is hypocrisy; to break with their false allies, who are the saints; and, finally, to banish from among them all the purchased rogues, who are three-fourths of their number."

or seven hundred lashes; five to one thousand each; of which inhuman torture one had received the whole, and two almost the whole at once."*

The colonists were not satisfied by the severity with which the rebel negroes had been visited. For some time the attention of religious men in England had been drawn to the wretched ignorance and depravity of the lower orders in our colonial islands. Various denominations of Christians had sent out missionaries to instruct them, and the Independents and Wesleyans had distinguished themselves by their Christian zeal. It was no path of flowers which these missionaries had chosen. The colonists were violently opposed to change; and with the usual feelings of despotic masters, they could not endure the idea of allowing their slaves to be educated; yet, in the face of danger and persecution, the missionaries persevered, and many of the negroes were brought to the knowledge of religion. The planters had tried every means to stop this "nuisance;" and when the rebellion broke out, they resolved to fix it upon the Christian teachers of the negroes.

The particulars of "Smith's case," afterwards so ably treated by Mr. Brougham, need not here be dwelt on. Suffice it to say, that he was an Independent missionary; was tried in a manner not only unjust, but absolutely illegal, before a court-martial of militia officers, and condemned to be hanged; but his treatment in prison destroyed his previously failing health, and he died in his dungeon in time to anticipate the executioner.†

* Hansard's Debates. New Series, vol. xi. p. 995.

† While Smith was dying in his prison (which is described as a place only suited to purposes of torture), he was compelled by his persecutors to draw a bill upon the funds of the London Missionary Society, in order to defray the expenses of his so-called trial. Many years afterwards the secretary of that Society, in arranging some old papers, met with this bill. In

The news of the ferment among the colonists, with the rapidly succeeding intelligence of the revolt of the negroes, of their overthrow, and of the severities inflicted upon them and upon their teachers, soon reached England. The disappointment and grief of the leading members of the anti-slavery party were great indeed; their lukewarm partisans left them at once, and joined in the loud outcry which arose against them. They were denounced as the causes of the disaffections of the colonists and the disorders among the slaves. The people at large, in looking at the confusions of the colonies, did not remember how gentle a remedy for the admitted evil of slavery was the one proposed by Mr. Buxton; that all parties in England had agreed, with some modifications, as to its prudence; and that only to the wilfulness and prejudice of the colonists were these unhappy results to be ascribed. But the angry reproaches which rang in Mr. Buxton's ears were as nothing when compared with the mortification he experienced on discovering that the Government, appalled by the consequences of the steps which they had taken, and apparently as regardless of their own dignity as of the interests of their black subjects, were determined to forfeit the pledge which Mr. Canning had given — that, if obedience were not voluntarily rendered by the colonial legislatures, it should be enforced. Rumours to this effect soon spread abroad; but they were of so indefinite a character, that the Abolitionists could not tell what steps the Government proposed to take, nor what

looking at it, his attention was drawn to one corner of the sheet, and, on examining it more carefully, he found, written in a minute hand, the reference "2 Cor. iv. 8, 9:" on turning to which he found the text, "We are troubled on every side, yet not distressed; we are perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed."

preparations should be made against them. All the circumstances seemed to call on Mr. Buxton to stop, but far from staying his steps he rather pushed forward. He was contemplating a new plan, namely, the emancipation of all children under seven years of age, ample compensation being granted to the masters; the children were to be educated and maintained by the British Government till they were seven years old, and then apprenticed to their former masters; after which they should be free.

The following letters will show fully how the sense of the difficulty of his position, and of the necessity there was for firmly maintaining it, gradually increased in his mind.

To Zachary Macaulay, Esq.

"Ampton, Jan. 14. 1824.

"Here I am, and have had the satisfaction of finding Wilberforce in good health. He seems by no means discouraged about our cause. Clarkson appears to have done his work well. At Norwich our friends were somewhat intimidated; but he had a meeting there, which revived all their ardour. * * * I have been hard at work, reading and making extracts from all the parliamentary slave papers. I am forming a dictionary, in which I insert information under different heads; I call it 'My Macaulay.'"*

On going to London in February he writes to Mrs. Buxton, who remained for a week or two longer at Cromer Hall: —

"Feb. 9.

"As yet we have had no debate on Slavery, but our foes are so very furious that I imagine we shall soon begin. I am intensely busy. On Saturday we had a meeting, to which I read

* When any of Mr. Macaulay's anti-slavery friends wanted information, they used to say, "Let us look it out in Macaulay," and rarely were they disappointed in their references to him.

my plan. The more I think of it, the more I like it. We meet again on Saturday: in the interim, an attack will probably be made on us, which I am to answer. I shall endeavour to do it with effect. We have a capital case as to the Demerara insurrection. Smith is innocent. They have offered him mercy if he will ask for it, and he has refused, standing on his innocence. I am in excellent spirits, and hold my head very high in the matter, and mean to be rather bold in my defence. I expect to see Canning to-morrow; he seems very cold to me, and the report is he will join the West Indians. If he does, we shall go to war with him in earnest."

"Feb. 10.

"My interview with Canning is for the purpose of ascertaining what Government means to do, and of seeing whether he is disposed to receive any plan from us."

"Feb. 11.

"I am so languid with over thought and over work, that I hardly know how to write, but it is worth while to spend one's strength on that which, if it succeeds, will change the condition, almost the nature, of 700,000 human beings. On Saturday we meet Canning at 12 o'clock, and Brougham, and all the leaders of our party, at the Duke of Gloucester's, at 3 o'clock. Then we shall decide on our course. I am not one bit discouraged, and heartily wish a discussion could be brought about, as I think it would change public opinion. How much, how very much happier I am in my Cromer retreat, than in the midst of all this bustle and turbulence! When you come, I shall be quieter, I hope. I am obliged to attend constantly at the House."

"Canning's Office, 6 o'clock, Feb. 14.

"We have had a very unsatisfactory interview with Canning, * * * The Government mean *to forfeit their pledge*, and to do next to nothing. * * * I have now seen Canning again. He promises to postpone any declaration to Parliament till he sees my plan."

To a Friend.

"Feb. 16.

"The degree of, opposition I will not call it, but virulence, against me is quite surprising. I much question whether there

is a more unpopular individual than myself in the House just at this moment. For this I do not care.

"17*th*. — The slavery question looks wretchedly. I begin to think that, opposed as we are by the West Indians, deserted by Government, and deemed enthusiasts by the public, we shall be able to do little or nothing. However, I rejoice that we have tried."

It was indeed no light unpopularity which Mr. Buxton had incurred. Both within and without the walls of the House, ridicule and abuse were heaped upon the Abolitionists during the first years of their attack on slavery. Their conduct was referred to the basest motives, and they were generally stigmatized as fools or knaves, sometimes as both. When the storm was at its highest, one of Mr. Buxton's friends asked him, "What shall I say when I hear people abusing you?" "Say!" he replied, snapping his fingers, "say *that*. You good folk think too much of your good name. Do right, and *right will be done you*." Yet he was not indifferent to the odium which he incurred. Several years afterwards, when public opinion had changed, he expresses, in one of his papers, his gratitude to God, "that my privileges and enjoyments in life have not been destroyed; that my enemies (enemies of mine, because I am the friend of the enslaved) have not triumphed over me; that I cannot now say, as David did, and as I was once prone to repeat, 'Reproach hath broken my heart.'"

To Mrs. Buxton.

"Feb. 17.

"I see very clearly that I shall not be able to go down to Cromer; my absence would further intimidate our few friends, who are sufficiently timid as it is. * * * I keep up my spirits pretty well, but what with the mental fatigue I have undergone, and the disappointment we have experienced, I cannot feel very light-hearted."

"Feb. 1824.

"We had a very bustling day on Saturday; a meeting with Canning at 12 o'clock, in which he told us, that Government had determined to *yield to the West Indian clamour, and do nothing, except in Trinidad*, where there is no Colonial Assembly. There they will do everything they promised last year. This timidity is very painful. It frustrates all our hopes, and it will enable the West Indians to say that we are wild enthusiastic people, and that the people of England ought to be guided by the sober discretion of Government—which sober discretion is down-right timidity."

To Joseph John Gurney, Esq.

"Feb. 24.

"H—— sent you, I believe, my plan. It has undergone material improvements; when first promulgated, it met with no support. At the first meeting at the Duke of Gloucester's it was received very coldly; at the second it obtained some faint praise; at the third, an unanimous vote, supported by Lord Lansdowne, Brougham, Mackintosh, and twenty others, sends it to Government, with the sanction of the meeting. I have been reading Smith's trial. If ever I speak on that subject, as I surely will, it will be without qualifying circumstances. He is as innocent as you are."

The ministers refused to adopt Mr. Buxton's scheme; and as the 16th of March approached (the day appointed by Mr. Canning for the discussion of the question), the Anti-slavery party, now reduced to a very small number, became much discouraged and depressed. The Government did not conceal that they meant to relinquish the policy of the preceding year; and it seemed probable that, having thus come to a breach with the Anti-slavery leaders, these latter would be treated as scapegoats on whom public indignation might be poured. Under these circumstances, a difference of opinion arose in the Anti-slavery councils as to the course to be pursued.

Many advised that the anticipated attack from Mr. Canning should be received in silence, and that the Anti-slavery party should not come forward to state their own case till some days afterwards, when the first impression made by his eloquence should have died away. On hearing that the venerable Mr. Stephen concurred in this advice, Mr. Buxton exclaimed —

"'Tis odds, indeed, when valiant Warwick flies."*

To the course recommended he himself was altogether opposed; he wished to make a stand at once, and indeed to act on the offensive, by exposing the vacillation of the Government, if it should prove that they did not intend to fulfil the expectations held out in the preceding year. In these views he was supported by Dr. Lushington, Mr. William Smith, Mr. W. Evans, and Mr. S. Hoare.

Mr. J. J. Gurney writes to him: —

"My dear Brother, "Norwich, 8 mo. 10th, 1824.

"I feel very much for thee and for our cause in the prospect of the approaching discussion in Parliament, and I feel inclined to remind thee (however needlessly) of the apostle's injunction, 'Quit you like men, be strong.' * * * I look upon Colonial Slavery as a monster who must have a very long succession hard knocks before he will expire. Why should we expect to get his extinction *into full train* in less than ten years? And why should we be discouraged overmuch, if the first knock has no other effect than to render the gentleman more lively and energetic than usual? * * * With regard to thyself, as I am fond of thy popularity, I am prone to dislike the contrary. But I have a strong belief that, in due time, thy history will afford a plain exemplification of the certainty of a divine promise, 'Them that honour me, I will honour!' Till then be content to suffer thy portion of persecution, and let no frowns of adversaries, no want

* Shakespere.

of faith, no private feeling of thine own incompetency, either deprive thee of thy spirits or spoil thy speech."

Thus encouraged, Mr. Buxton resolved to persevere: the other leaders gradually fell into his views, and the plan of operations was arranged. The previous division of opinion had, however, been a source of great anxiety to him; and he was almost worn out by his unremitting exertions, which had of late been chiefly directed to the procuring digested proofs of the cruelty with which the slaves were treated, and of the rapid decrease of the black population. He writes on the 12th February, 1824: — "The weight of business, and, worse still, of thought, which overhangs me at this time, is greater than I ever experienced before;" and on another occasion,—"I am fatigued, I am distressed with fatigue." The prospect before him was full of difficulties. The small Anti-slavery party were attacked on all sides with fury. In the House there were hardly more than half-a-dozen staunch friends to the cause, while two hundred members were considered to be more or less directly inimical to it; and now, if the Government were to be swayed by the tide of public opinion, and abandon its schemes of the previous year, how could the small unaided band of Abolitionists indulge the hope of even ultimate success in their undertaking?

Their fears were but too well founded. Mr. Canning carefully withdrew from his connection with those whose principles and measures he had the year before, in a great degree, adopted as his own, but whom he now discovered to be acting "under the impulses of enthusiasm;" and he informed the House that the Government was determined to compel the ameliorations in Trinidad, but to apply for the present no measure more stringent than "admonition" to the contumacious colonies. One spe-

cimen of the graceful eloquence by which his speech was distinguished, we cannot refrain from inserting. Having shown that the conduct of the people of Jamaica might well have justified severe coercive measures, he adds, "Undoubtedly it would be easy to select passages from the Jamaica gazettes which might put Parliament in a towering passion, but my indignation is restrained by consideration of the powerlessness of the body from which the offence comes, compared to the omnipotence of that to which it is offered. The consciousness of superior strength disarms the spirit of resentment. I could revenge, but I would much rather reclaim. I prefer that moral self-restraint, so beautifully expressed by the poet, when he represents Neptune as allaying the wild waters, instead of rebuking the winds which had put them in a roar,—

'Quos ego — sed motos præstat componere fluctus.'"

Mr. Buxton replied, and fearlessly attacked the Government for its vacillating conduct. He read over the resolutions of the year before, which he justly denominated "a distinct pledge given by Government, that the condition of the slave population should be ameliorated." Quoting also Mr. Canning's words, that "if the colonial legislatures would not consent to these ameliorations, — if any resistance should be manifested to the expressed and declared wish of Parliament, any resistance which should partake, not of reason, but of contumacy, — it would create a case upon which His Majesty's Government would not hesitate to come down to Parliament for counsel."

"Now," said Mr. Buxton, "If this full and comprehensive pledge, this engagement given as to *all* the colonies, is to be frittered down, at present at least, to a single island; if the ad-

vantages promised are to be granted indeed to the 30,000 slaves in Trinidad, but withheld from the 350,000 in Jamaica, and the 70,000 in Barbadoes; if the '*earliest period*' is to be construed to mean some time, so undefined and distant that no man can say in what century it will take place; if our pledge to do this is now to mean no more than that we will suffer it to be done by the slow and gradual course of admonition and example — then I see no reason why ten centuries may not elapse before the negroes are freed from their present state of melancholy and deplorable thraldom. We who have engaged in the cause, we, at least, will be no parties to such a desertion of duty, to such a breach of faith.

"I well know," he added, "the difficult situation in which I stand. No man is more aware than I am of my inability to follow the brilliant and able speech which has just been delivered. But I have a duty to perform, and I will perform it. I know well what I incur by this. I know how I call down upon myself the violent animosity of an exasperated and most powerful party. I know how reproaches have rung in my ears since that pledge was given, and how they will ring with tenfold fury now that I call for its fulfilment. Let them ring! I will not purchase for myself a base indemnity with such a sting as this on my conscience: 'You ventured to agitate the question; a pledge was obtained; you were, therefore, to be considered the holder of that pledge to which the hopes of half a million of people were linked. And then, fearful of a little unpopularity, and confounded by the dazzling eloquence of the right honourable gentleman, you sat still, you held your peace, and were satisfied to see his pledge, in favour of a whole archipelago, reduced to a single island.'"*

He concluded his speech, in which he laid bare a series of acts of atrocious cruelty in the treatment of the negroes, by stating distinctly, "What I have now said I have said from a sense of public duty. I have no hostility to the planters. Compensation to the planter, emancipation to the children of the negro—these are my desires, this is the consummation, the just and glorious

* Hansard's Debates. New Series, vol. x. p. 1115.

consummation on which my hopes are planted, and to which, as long as I live, my most strenuous efforts shall be directed!" He was well supported by Dr. Lushington, Mr. Evans, and Mr. Wilberforce. The latter, who, as usual, was hopeful amidst discouragements, thus addresses him on the day after the debate: —

"My dear Friend, "Brompton Grove, March 17. 1824.

"It was quite a disappointment to me not to see you at the House to-day. There are points on which I shall be glad to confer with you. Meanwhile I am strongly urged by my feelings to express to you the solid satisfaction with which I take a *sober estimate* of the progress which, through the goodness of Providence, we have already made, and the good hopes which we may justly indulge as to the future. To find the two Houses of Parliament, each full of members to the brim, consulting about the interests and comforts of those who, not long ago, were scarcely rated above the level of ourang-outangs, is almost as sure an indication of our complete success ere long, as the streaks of morning light are of the fulness of meridian day. I hope I may live to congratulate you, even in this world, on the complete success of your generous labours; at all events, I trust humbly, that we may rejoice and triumph together in a better world, for we, my dear friend, may, more truly than the great historian, affirm that we are working for eternity. And our κτῆμα ἐς ἀεὶ will be enjoyed, I trust, in common with many, many of our poor black brethren, when all bondage and injustice, all sorrow and pain having ceased, love and truth, and mercy and peace and joy, shall be our everlasting portion. O, my friend, let us strive more and more earnestly for all that is right here, looking forward to these glorious prospects!"*

* The following lines, which, under the title of "A Portrait," have since been published among the poems of the Rev. T. Hankinson, were written in reference to Mr. Buxton's conduct at this period.

"I honour him, who stands in calm reliance,
Amid a senate's frown, and shrug and jeer;
Hurls in the scoffer's face his proud defiance,
And fearing no man, dares his God to fear;
Who spins no smooth harangue for statesman's ear
Of that misnam'd expediency; but he
Deems *that* expedient which is just and fair;—
Pronounces *that* most safe which ought to be.
And cries, "Let man have right, for God hath made him free!"

On the 1st of June a motion respecting the missionary Smith was brought forward by Mr. Brougham, in a brilliant speech of four hours' length, which produced a strong effect upon public feeling.

One remarkable circumstance by which the Demerara insurrection was distinguished, namely, the extraordinary forbearance of the rebel negroes, is thus mentioned by him: —

"The slaves," he said, "inflamed by false hopes of freedom, agitated by rumours, and irritated by the suspense and ignorance in which they were kept; exasperated by ancient as well as more recent wrongs (for a sale of fifty or sixty of them had just been announced, and they were about to be violently separated and dispersed), were satisfied with combining not to work, and thus making their managers repair to the town and ascertain the precise nature of the boon reported to have arrived from England. The calumniated minister had so far humanised his poor flock, his dangerous preaching had so enlightened them, the lessons of himself and his hated brethren had sunk so deep in their minds, that, by the testimony of the clergyman, and even of the overseers, the maxims of the Gospel of peace were upon their lips in the midst of rebellion, and restrained their hands when no other force was present to resist them. 'We will take no life,' said they, 'for our pastors have taught us not to take that which we cannot give,' a memorable peculiarity which drew from the truly pious minister* of the Established Church there the exclamation, 'that he shuddered to write that the planters were seeking the life of the man whose teaching had saved theirs.'"†

Sir James Mackintosh followed, and was succeeded by Dr. Lushington, Mr. Wilberforce, Mr. Williams, and Mr. Denman. The debate was closed by a powerful reply

* The clergyman here referred to was the Rev. Mr. Austin, whose conduct in this transaction caused his exile from Demerara, and drew from Sir James Mackintosh the emphatic declaration, "that he needed nothing but a larger and more elevated theatre, to place him among those who will be, in all ages, regarded by mankind as models for imitation, and objects of reverence."

† Hansard's Debates. New Series, vol. xi. p. 994.

from Mr. Brougham. This discussion, as had been predicted, changed the current of public opinion. The nation, which before had partaken of the consternation of the Government, began to awaken to the truth, and from henceforth the religious public in England was strongly enlisted on behalf of the oppressed missionaries and their persecuted followers; and this feeling soon increased into a detestation of that system, of which such intolerance was the natural fruit. On the 15th of June the subject was renewed in the House by Mr. Wilberforce, and a promise was wrested from the Government of extending the Order in Council to St. Lucia and Demerara, as well as Trinidad.

Mr. Buxton passed the autumn at Cromer Hall, recruiting his health, and at the same time strenuously exerting himself in procuring information which might assist the future conduct of the cause.

In the beginning of 1825 Mr. Wilberforce retired from Parliament. In a letter which he wrote to Mr. Buxton on the occasion, he says,—

"I should like you to be the person to move for a new writ for Bramber as my PARLIAMENTARY EXECUTOR. I can now only say, may God bless you and yours; bless you in public and private as a senator, and still more as a man. So wishes, so prays for you, and all that are most dear to you,

"Your ever sincere and affectionate friend,

"W. WILBERFORCE."

Mr. Buxton thus mentions this event:—

"London, Feb. 10. 1825.

"I went, on the night of my arrival, to Wilberforce. He insists on my moving the writ of abdication. I feel it just about the highest honour I could have; and yet it gives me unaffected pain, from a consciousness of my inability to be his successor. I must, however, labour hard, and try how far labour will supply his talents and reputation. I now begin to repent that I shot

so much and read so little during my long holiday,—and yet I did work pretty hard.

"Well, only *one* thing is absolutely necessary to do some good, and that is a pure and fervent determination to do my duty in private and in public.

"I can give you no information about our measures, but I have no other notion than that we shall eventually succeed."

T. F. Buxton, Esq., to a Friend.

"London, Feb. 24. 1825.

"I find I have got the character of being very rash and impetuous. In our Anti-slavery proceedings I have always been for vigorous measures. I thought our cause invincible in itself, and that it was always to be treated by us as if we had no distrust of its soundness; and, therefore, the maxim I quote in our deliberations is that of the navy in the last war, 'Always fight.' This is well known to our adversaries, and makes them bitter against me to the last point. I can well bear this."

In 1822 Mr. Wilberforce had mentioned in his diary that "the House was made up of West Indians, Government men, a few partisans, and a few sturdy Abolitionists — William Smith, Buxton, Butterworth, Evans, and myself." He, the great champion of the oppressed, had now retired, and during the three intervening years the very "few sturdy Abolitionists" had received but small accession to their numbers, though, it may be confessed, that the great ability and hearty zeal of Dr. Lushington, the varied talents of Mr. Brougham, Sir James Mackintosh, and Mr. Denman, in great measure compensated for their want of numerical strength.

With Dr. Lushington Mr. Buxton maintained, from the beginning to the end of the Anti-slavery struggle, a peculiarly close connection. "He has ever been," said Mr. Buxton, "as disinterested, as honest, as generous a supporter of our great cause as could be; and in private life a most kind and faithful friend, with no

other fault than too much zeal, and too much liberality." They had a perfect community of interest, of anxiety, and of counsel. Indeed, if any credit whatever is due to Mr. Buxton for his conduct of the Anti-Slavery campaign, an equal share must be awarded to Dr. Lushington; for every idea, and every plan, was originated and arranged between them. Important as was Dr. Lushington's parliamentary assistance, not one tenth part of his exertions for the cause ever met the public eye. It was in the long and anxious deliberations in which, day after day, he used to be engaged with Mr. Buxton, that the cause reaped the chief benefit of his great talents and far-sighted policy.

Another essential member of the Anti-slavery cabinet was Mr. Zachary Macaulay. The parliamentary leaders derived the utmost assistance from his matured judgment, and from those vast stores of information which were treasured up in his memory. He also was the editor of that important vehicle of information, the "Anti-slavery Reporter."

There are many who still remember Mr. Macaulay's stooping figure, his entangled utterance, and neglected dress; but within there dwelt the spirit of a hero and a heart glowing with love to God and man. From the moment of his embracing the Abolition cause till the day of his death, he flinched neither from toil nor privations, neither from obloquy nor persecution, but sacrificed himself, with the whole of his personal hopes, to advancing the cause of humanity. The privacy of his course was only chequered by occasional bursts of animosity from those who felt their defeat to be in a great measure owing to his silent but steady exertions. To labour and suffer without prospect of gain or applause, in the simple hope of alleviating the miseries of others, was the lot in

life that he cheerfully fulfilled. There may be a more graceful and more attractive career — can there be one of more solemn grandeur? Still, however, we may hope that posterity will grant him that just meed of honour, which, during his life, was denied him.

During the first four years of the Anti-slavery struggle, the leaders were chiefly employed in clearing the ground for future operations. Emancipation seemed far distant. They were therefore more occupied in investigating and bringing to light the evils of the present state of things, than in framing plans for that which they trusted would eventually succeed it.

In this endeavour great assistance was derived from the publication, in 1824, of the first part of Mr. James Stephen's 'Delineation of Slavery,' described in one of Mr. Macaulay's letters as "Stephen's mighty book which marks the hand of a giant." Mr. Stephen had been, as is well known, one of the leading opponents of the Slave-trade, and his success in enforcing the registration of slaves was of great importance, both in that struggle and in the one which succeeded it. His endeavour now was, to open the eyes of Parliament and the public to the real character of the system.

Early in 1825 Dr. Lushington exposed the unworthy treatment of the free people of colour in the West Indies, selecting, as a prominent instance, the cruel usage of Messrs. Lecesne and Escoffery.

In June of the same year Mr. Buxton brought before the House the case of Mr. Shrewsbury. This gentleman was a Wesleyan missionary in Barbadoes, "in whose conduct," as Mr. Canning expressly stated in the House, "there did not appear the slightest ground of blame or suspicion." But the planters were exasperated against him for his exertions in the instruction of the Negroes

and free people of colour: and it was also charged against him, that he had actually corresponded with Mr. Buxton! "Though," said the latter in the House, "I never received from or wrote to him a single letter; *nor did I know that such a man existed* till I happened to take up a newspaper, and there read with some astonishment, that he was going to be hanged for corresponding with me!"

On two successive Sundays in October, 1823, the doors of Mr. Shrewsbury's chapel were stormed during the hours of divine worship by a furious mob, who did not, however, at that time proceed to actual outrage; but a day or two afterwards a "Proclamation" was published, calling on all the "true lovers of religion" to assemble in arms on the following Sunday, and pull down the chapel and mission-house. This they accordingly did: but Mr. Shrewsbury had concealed himself in the house of a clergyman, "whose kindness," said Mr. Buxton, "then displayed to a poor friendless missionary, hunted for his life by an infuriated mob, I will now return—by concealing his name, knowing that if I were to mention it with approbation, the fate of Mr. Austin, of Demerara, would await him."

"There is," he continued, "in this transaction at Barbadoes, as there was also in that of Demerara, that which of all things I hate the most—a rank, fierce, furious spirit of religious bigotry, dominant throughout the island, and pursuing its victims, the one to death and the other to exile. But there is that also which does honour to human nature, and casts a glory round the Church to which I belong, and which I prefer to all others—namely, that these poor victims, Dissenters, Missionaries, Methodists, though they were, found their best friends and their most faithful advisers in the ranks of our clergy. Mr. Austin, for one of the most noble acts which have been done in our days, is a ruined and banished man; and I conceal the name of

the other, in order to spare him—the honours, indeed, but—the sufferings of martyrdom." *

He concluded, not by demanding any punishment on the guilty parties, but simply by moving that they should be compelled to rebuild the chapel. The House, however, would only join him in a vote of censure upon those concerned in the crime.

In his reply at the end of the debate he said,—

"I wish it to be distinctly understood that it is my firm and unalterable resolution to devote all my life and my efforts to advocating the cause of the slaves; and that I will persist in that course, in spite of opposition, unpopularity, obloquy, or falsehood."

To a Friend.

"June 24. 1825.

"I have now to tell you the events of yesterday. At first the usual fate of West India questions attended me — a great indisposition to hear anything; but I gradually won their attention, and gave my narrative fully. No very lively interest betrayed itself, but they listened like persons who wished to learn. * * * I am prepared for a poor report in the newspapers, for even the reporters sympathise with the House in detestation of slavery questions; and though Lushington made a most capital speech last week on the Jamaica business, it was only reported in a very superficial manner."

In the recess of this year we find him attending Anti-slavery meetings at Norwich and elsewhere; and employed in arranging and settling the division of labour with his coadjutors.

He tells Mr. Brougham: —

"Cromer Hall, Sept. 8.

"Lushington, Macaulay, and I, have now for several days met directly after breakfast, and employed ourselves in discussing various questions relative to slavery. I now send you the results."

* Hansard. New Series, vol. xiii. p. 1285.

After detailing the projects for the ensuing session, he adds,—

"Macaulay leaves me to-morrow; Lushington stays for several weeks; he and I mean to continue our morning meetings."

Sir James Mackintosh to T. Fowell Buxton, Esq.

"Dear Buxton, "Harrowgate, Sept. 25. 1825.

"I received your plan of campaign, but, as I am going to Brougham's house in Westmoreland, I reserve my observations on it till I have a conference with him. My health is now so much better than ever I expected it would be, that I can with more than usual confidence undertake to perform any task allotted me to the best of my abilities. * * * The two great measures are, the Bill to enforce and generalise the Order in Council, and the particular plan of Emancipation. I almost think that both are too much for one session. * * * I hope to be in London in four weeks, where I shall wish to hear from you.

"Ever yours faithfully,
"J. MACKINTOSH."

In the beginning of the session of 1826, Mr. Buxton mentions that two meetings about slavery had been already held; and he adds,—

"We are determined to bring forward, without delay, two or three enormities, as a prelude to the Bill for coercing the Colonial Assemblies. The Berbice Papers * and the insurrection in Jamaica have been selected."

"February 23.

"I saw Canning yesterday: he was very friendly; intimated that the Government meant to do something; but as he had refused to tell the West Indians what that something was, he

* The Berbice Papers were the official statement by the Fiscal of the complaints made to him by the Negroes against their masters, and his judgments thereon. The cruelties thus brought to light were of the most revolting character. Abundant extracts from these papers will be found in the Anti-Slavery Reporter for October 31. 1825, vol. i.

also refused to tell us. On Tuesday next I bring forward the London Petition, and we shall have a warm discussion. On Thursday we have Denman's motion on the Jamaica Trials — another fierce discussion; and these will probably be followed by a host of other questions."

Mr. Buxton presented the London petition against slavery on the 1st of March: it was signed by 72,000 persons. In his speech he praised the Order in Council enforced in Trinidad, and again pointed out how ineffectual had been the recommendations of the Government to the legislatures of the other islands. "I am anxious," he declared, "to say nothing that can give offence to any party; but it is my duty broadly to declare my confirmed and deliberate conviction, that this House must do the work themselves, or suffer it to be altogether abandoned." *

He thus states the result of this debate: —

"March 2.

"Last night we had our debate. Canning was not satisfactory: he preferred *to give the West Indians another year*, and then to legislate. We are going to have another debate to-night. I am as tired as a person well can be."

The next evening came on Mr. Denman's motion. He took the case of eight of the Negroes executed after the Jamaica insurrection of 1823; and demanded a vote of censure on those concerned in condemning them. How forced and illegal some of the proceedings had been, will be seen from the following brief extract from Mr. Buxton's speech: —

"Next came the evidence of the constable. He was asked, whether he had not found guns amongst the insurgents? His answer was, that he had not; but he was *shown a place where he was told guns had been.* Then he was asked, if he had not

* Hansard's Debates. New Series, vol. xiv. p. 968.

found large quantities of ammunition? And he answered that he had not. Had he not found a number of bayonets? 'No,' said the constable, 'but I was shown *a basket, in which I was told a great number of bayonets had been!*' Such was the evidence on which these men were hanged."

The House resolved, that it would be inexpedient to impeach the sentences which had been passed; but "that further proof had been afforded by them of the evils inseparably attendant upon a state of slavery."

After the close of this session, there was a pause in the operations of the Abolitionists. As Mr. Canning had positively declared that the Government would give the colonial legislature another year's trial, before it would take the task of amelioration into its own hands, nothing remained for the Anti-slavery party but to await the expiration of that period.

CHAPTER X.

1822—1826.

CROMER HALL. — SHOOTING. — A COURTEOUS POACHER. — THE SPORTING PROFESSOR. — MR. BUXTON'S DELIGHT IN HORSES. — HIS INFLUENCE OVER THE YOUNG. — MAXIMS. — LETTER TO A NEPHEW. — HIS LOVE OF A MANLY CHARACTER. — HIS GENTLENESS. — SHIPWRECK AT CROMER. — PERILOUS EXPLOIT. — HIS RELIGIOUS INFLUENCE. — KINDNESS TO THE POOR. — LETTER ON STYLE. — CORRESPONDENCE. — MARTIN'S ACT. — CORRESPONDENCE. — LETTER TO A CLERGYMAN ON HIS NEW HOUSE.

For the last few years Mr. Buxton had generally resided with his family in the spring and summer near the House of Commons, spending, however, much of his time at Ham House, Mr. S. Gurney's seat in Essex, and with Mr. S. Hoare, at Hampstead. Amid the turmoil of his parliamentary life, these country visits were of great advantage to him; as affording him quiet hours for study, and the opportunity of taking those solitary rambles which were the times of his deepest reflection.

In 1825 he took a house in Devonshire Street, Portland Place; but as long as he remained in Parliament, a day of leisure generally found him and Mrs. Buxton either at Hampstead or at Ham House. Mr. and Mrs. S. Hoare also regularly passed the months of September and October at Cromer, and for the first year or two Cromer Hall was held in common by the two families.

After the busy summer in London, Mr. Buxton highly relished the retirement and recreation which this place afforded. He never lost his taste for shooting, and had the reputation of being a first-rate shot.

Great pains were taken by him in the management of his game, especially in rearing his pheasants, which used to feed in very large numbers on the lawn, immediately under the drawing-room windows; yet he was scarcely ever annoyed by poachers. On one occasion, however, while riding along the road, he saw a young man, in an adjoining field, fire at a partridge and kill it. He opened the gate, and, riding up to the youth, who seemed not a little startled at the apparition, said to him in a somewhat abrupt tone, "Now, Sir, allow me to ask you three questions: First, what is your name and residence; secondly, where is your licence; and, thirdly, who gave you leave to shoot over my ground?" The young man made a low bow, and answered in the blandest manner: "My name, Sir, is ——. As to your two other questions, with your leave, I'll waive them. Sir, I wish you a very good morning;" and so saying, to Mr. Buxton's no small amusement, he slipped out of the field.

Once, when he was staying with Mr. Coke at Holkham, a well-known Professor was also one of the visitors. The venerable historian had never had a gun in his hand, but on this occasion Mr. Coke persuaded him to accompany the shooting-party; care, however, was taken to place him at a corner of the covert, where it was thought the other sportsmen would be out of his reach. When the rest of the party came up to the spot where he was standing, Mr. Coke said to him, "Well, what sport? You have been firing pretty often!" "Hush!" said the Professor, "there it goes again;" and he was just raising his gun to his shoulder, when a man walked very quietly from the bushes about seventy yards in front of him. It was one of the beaters who had been set to stop the pheasants, and his leather gaiters, dimly seen

through the bushes, had been mistaken for a hare by the Professor, who, much surprised by its tenacity of life, had been firing at it whenever he saw it move. "But," said Mr. Buxton, "the man had never discovered that the Professor was shooting at him!"

No Arab ever took a greater delight in horses than Mr. Buxton; and several of his favourites, especially John Bull, Abraham, and Jeremie, were renowned for their strength and beauty. He was considered a very good judge, and never hesitated to give any price, in order to render his stud more complete. Of dogs, too, he was very fond; one of his pets came into his possession in a singular manner. He was standing at the door of the House of Commons, talking to a friend, when a beautiful black and tan terrier rushed between them, and immediately began barking furiously at Mr. Joseph Pease, who was speaking. All the members jumped up, shouting and laughing, while the officers of the House chased the dog round and round, till at last he took refuge with Mr. Buxton; who, as he could find no traces of an owner, carried him home. He proved to be quite an original. One of his whims was, that he would never go into the kitchen, nor yet into a poor man's cottage; but he formed a habit of visiting by himself at the country-houses in the neighbourhood of Cromer, and his refined manners and intelligence made 'Speaker' a welcome guest, wherever he pleased to go.

Once at rest in the retirement of Cromer Hall, Mr. Buxton began to lose the grave and care-worn expression which usually marked his countenance while under the heavy pressure of business in town: not that the autumn was wholly spent in recreation; on the contrary, his studies, chiefly bearing on public objects, were steadily pursued. He generally passed the latter part of his

evenings alone in his study, frequently remaining there to a very late hour.

Cromer Hall was often filled with an easy social party, but he had no wish to extend his circle much beyond his own relatives, a select few of his parliamentary friends, and the families in the immediate neighbourhood. He had no taste for society of a more formal, and, as he thought, insipid character; nor did he find much pleasure in conversation, though at table he would usually enliven the party by his playfulness of manner, and by his store of anecdotes, which he could tell with much force and spirit. He took great pains in providing amusements for the younger members of the circle. There is much picturesque scenery around Cromer, and large parties were often collected for excursions, to Sheringham, one of the most beautiful spots in all the eastern counties, to the wooded dells of Felbrigg and Runton, or to the rough heath-ground by the Black Beacon. At home, also, he was energetic in setting on foot amusements for his young friends, such as acting charades, Christmas games, or amusing reading. At one time a family newspaper was started, which appeared once a-week; and great was the interest excited in reading the various contributions, grave and gay, which every one sent in. Sometimes he would give a list of poets, from whose works the juvenile part of the circle were invited to learn by heart: and examinations were held, with valuable books as prizes. Other schemes of the same kind were frequently set on foot, all intended to draw out the mind, and spur it to exertion. His thoughtfulness for others, combined with an unswerving strictness, gave him a remarkable influence over those around him; it has been thus referred to by one who was a frequent guest at Cromer Hall.

"I wish I could describe the impression made upon me by the extraordinary power of interesting and stimulating others, which was possessed by Sir Fowell Buxton some thirty years ago. In my own case it was like having powers of thinking, powers of feeling, and, above all, the love of true poetry, suddenly aroused within me, which, though I may have possessed them before, had been till then unused. From Locke on the Human Understanding to 'William of Deloraine, good at need,' *he* woke up in me the sleeping principle of taste; and in giving me such objects of pursuit, has added immeasurably to the happiness of my life."

He more than once recommended Locke on the Understanding to the perusal of young people, as a useful work in establishing the habit of receiving truth with impartiality. "That," he said, "is one of the most important things to impress on the minds of children, habitually to seek for *the truth*, whether for or against our previous opinions and interests." He certainly illustrated his own maxim, for he was from his youth up remarkably free from prejudices, and ready to give ear to whatever could be adduced against his own views.

He seems to have had some idea of publishing a little work, to be called "Maxims for the Young." The following extracts from the rough memoranda for this work, throw light, not only upon his views as to education, but also on his own character:—

HINTS FOR MAXIMS FOR THE YOUNG.

"Mankind in general mistake difficulties for impossibilities. That is the difference between those who effect, and those who do not.

"People of weak judgment are the most timid, as horses half blind are most apt to start.

"Burke, in a letter to Miss Shackleton, says:—

"'Thus much in favour of activity and occupation, that the more one has to do, the more one is capable of doing, even beyond our direct task.'

"Plato, 'better to err in acts, than principles.'

"Idleness the greatest prodigality.

"Two kinds of idleness,—a listless and an active.

"If industrious, we should direct our efforts to right ends.

"Possibly it may require as much (industry) to be best billiard-player as to be senior wrangler.

"The endowments of nature we cannot command, but we can cultivate those given.

"My experience, that men of great talents are apt to do nothing for want of vigour.

"Vigour, — energy, — resolution, — firmness of purpose, — these carry the day.

"Is there one whom difficulties dishearten,— who bends to the storm?—He will do little. Is there one who *will* conquer? —That kind of man never fails.

"Let it be your first study to teach the world that you are not wood and straw—*some iron in you.*

"Let men know that what you say you will do; that your decision made is final,— no wavering; that, once resolved, you are not to be allured or intimidated.

"Acquire and maintain that character."

* * * * *

"*Eloquence* — the most useful talent; one to be acquired, or improved; all the great speakers bad at first. — Huskisson. — How to be acquired.

"Write your speeches,—no inspiration.

"Labour to put your thoughts in the clearest view.

"A bold, decided outline.

"Read 'multum, non multa,— homo unius libri.'

"'Learn by heart everything that strikes you.'—FOX.

"Thus ends my lecture; nineteen out of twenty become good or bad as they choose to make themselves.

"The most important part of your education is that which you now give yourselves."

The same value for strength of character is displayed in the following mention in his papers of a young member of his circle about to enter on life.

"He is now at a very critical period of life. In a few months he will leave home, and his fate and fortunes will mainly depend on the degree of *vigour of character* which he will then display. Deliver him, O Lord, from fading resolutions, from feeble and unstable purposes, from an idle wavering mind, and from habits of self-indulgence. Give him firmness of purpose, enable him to take hold on his object with a vigorous and manly grasp. Give him industry and perseverance; a clear judgment to resolve, and, once resolved, an inflexible determination. But let this strength of character be based on better than human foundations; let it be given by thee; limited, corrected, kept within bounds by thee. Oh, that he may be able in after life to ascribe his success to the Lord, and to say, with David, 'It is God that girdeth me with strength, and maketh my way perfect.'"

He writes to his nephew, Mr. Hoare's eldest son, who had been disappointed in the scholarship examination at Trinity:—

"Hampstead, April 21. 1827.

"I need not, I suppose, say that I have my full share of this disappointment; but that is not the subject on which I am going to write. All my advice is crowded into this single sentence, 'Tu ne cede malis, sed contrà audentior ito.'

"This mortification is a test which will try your character. If that character be feeble, the disappointment will weigh upon your spirits; you will relax your exertions, and begin to despond and to be idle. That is the general character of men; they can do very well when the breeze is in their favour, but they are cowed by the storm. If your character is vigorous and masculine, you will gather strength from this defeat, and encouragement from this disappointment. If fortune will not give you her favours, you will tear them from her by force; and if you were my own son, as you very nearly are, I would rather you should have failed, and then exhibited this determination, than that everything should have gone smoothly. I like your letter much; it breathes a portion of this unconquerable spirit, which

is worth all the Latin, Greek, and Logarithms in the world, and all the prizes which ever were given. Now, then, is the time; be a man and avenge yourself at the next examination. If you are sick at heart, and can't sleep, and laugh, and defy malicious fortune, then you may make a very decent banker, but there is an end of you. If you can summon up courage for the occasion, and pluck from this failure the materials for future success, then the loss of the scholarship may be a gain for life."*

He could not bear the stream of life to run shallow: he liked its tide to be full and strong, longing to make others share in his own impetus and force of character. This delight in manliness of mind led him to set his face firmly against all listlessness in amusement as well as in study. He was much averse to confining boys too closely to the school-room, and was always ready to propose holidays; but then he took care to provide shooting, cricketing, or some other active diversion for them. At the same time he was very strict in enforcing his orders. The tendency of his mind was to assume command in a decisive and even somewhat stern manner; but this was corrected by the extreme tenderness of his heart, which led him in all things to weigh carefully the feelings and pleasures of those under his authority. "I know," he says in a letter from Cromer Hall, "that I am often harsh, and violent, and very disagreeable, but I sincerely think that I do not know a person less inclined than I am to *curb the deep desires* of others, or to force my views down their throats. I believe I am a true friend to liberty of feeling, and I think it high arrogance in one human being to pretend to dictate to another what is for that other's happiness." His forbearance

* This advice was not neglected by his nephew. He gained his scholarship the next time; was a high wrangler, and in the first class of the Tripos.

was continually shown in the turmoil of public life. In transacting business, on committees, and in the conduct of difficult affairs with those of widely diverging opinions, his subjugation of temper and his gentle persuasive manner were remarkable. One of his most faithful supporters at Weymouth thus writes of him: —

"It must be well known to every one conversant with contested elections, that nothing can try the temper more, from the unwarrantable liberty of the press, and the unfair means, both in word and deed, used on such occasions; yet though I have followed the late Sir Fowell through all his hard, long, and severe contests in this borough, I never knew him *once* lose his temper, *once* give a harsh reply, or use an unkind word to any one; nothing ever disturbed the 'even tenor of his way.'"

Before the establishment of the floating light off Happisburgh, wrecks were very frequent on the Cromer coast. On any rumour of a vessel in danger, Mr. Buxton and Mr. Hoare used to be among the first on the shore, not merely to urge and direct the efforts of others, but to give their personal aid. On one of these occasions Mr. Buxton himself ran considerable risk in the terrible storm of the 31st of October, 1823, which was long remembered on the Norfolk coast. About twelve o'clock a collier brig, "The Duchess of Cumberland," ran upon the rocks off the Cromer light-house. The life-boat was immediately brought out, but so tremendous was the sea that no persuasion could induce the fishermen to put off. Once when a wave ran up the beach and floated her, Mr. Buxton, hoping to spur them on by his example, sprang in, shouting to them to follow him, but without effect. Captain Manby's gun was repeatedly fired, but the line fell short of the vessel, in which nine sailors were seen lashed to the shrouds. At length a huge sea burst over her, and she went to pieces,

blackening the waters with her cargo of coal. For an instant the spectators looked on in silent awe.—"Poor dear hearts, they're all gone now!" exclaimed an old fisherman; but at that moment Mr. Buxton thought he saw one of them borne upon the top of a wave. Without waiting for a rope, he at once dashed into the surf—caught the man—flung himself upon him, and struggled against the strong drawback of the retiring billow, until others could reach him, and he was dragged to land with his rescued mariner, and carried up the cliff in a state of utter exhaustion. The deed was considered by those on shore to have been one of extreme peril and daring.* He said himself that he felt the waves play with him as he could play with an orange.

A prominent feature of his character was the careful employment of his influence in promoting the spread of religion around him. On the Sunday evenings his large dining-room was usually filled with a miscellaneous audience, many of the fishermen and other neighbours collecting round him as well as his own household; and very impressive were his brief but well digested comments on the passage of Scripture he had read. His rule was to say nothing unless he had something really weighty to say. His manner of speaking showed that he was not only a teacher, but a learner; he appeared to drink in the truth, and to appropriate it with an earnestness which could not but excite a corresponding feeling in those who heard him. His sentiments, with regard to the study of the Scriptures, are thus expressed: —

"Undoubtedly it is good to read the Bible; it is well to read it occasionally; and if we do no more than take a super-

* See the Fisherman's Friendly Visitor, March, 1845.

ficial view of it, and just snatch a few fragments of truth from it, even this is better than its utter neglect.

"But this is not the way to gather from the Sacred Word those treasures of knowledge which it will yield. We must not read it, but study it; we must not cast a hasty glance upon it, but meditate upon it deeply with fixed attention, with full purpose of heart, with all the energy of our minds, if we desire to become masters of the treasures of revelation; and I am sure that Scripture thus diligently studied, read, marked, learned, and inwardly digested, and read, too, with prayer for the influence of the Holy Spirit, will furnish us with new light, open to us new views, and will appear to us in itself of a new character, adorned with a variety of beauties, with an emphasis of expression, with a power and a vigour and an appropriateness to our own needs, with a harvest of divine instruction and cogent truth never yielded to its careless cultivation. I have known men, and men of good understanding, who have been induced to read the Bible, and who have protested that they could make nothing of it, that they could not comprehend it;—no wonder; it is a sealed book to those who neither ask nor receive the Holy Spirit.

"An astronomer looks at the face of the heavens through a telescope, spangled with stars and planets, and sees an harmony, an order, a profuse display of power and wisdom. An ordinary man surveys the same sky with the naked eye, and observes nothing of all this; he has not the instrument; he wants the telescope which would reveal the wonders of the heavens to him. And so it is in reading the Bible; if a man looks at it with naked unassisted reason, he sees little and learns nothing; he wants the instrument, the Holy Spirit, to guide his inquiries, to enlighten his understanding, to touch his heart.

"But if some read it and learn nothing, others read it and learn but little. They begin without prayer, and they end without meditation. They read, but they do not inwardly digest; while others embrace its truths, seize and secure its treasures, and, to use the figure of Scripture, receive the engrafted word which is able to save their souls."

Mr. Buxton and Mr. Hoare had taken much pains in establishing branches of the Bible and Missionary Socie-

ties at Cromer, and from that time they made a point of attending and taking a part in the annual meetings. Only on one occasion was Mr. Hoare absent from them up to the time of his death — a period of twenty-five years; and Mr. Buxton was scarcely less regular. In every way he strove to promote the well-being of his poorer neighbours: their sufferings touched him to the quick, and great was his anxiety to relieve them. He would take pains also to gratify them in small things as well as to benefit them in greater matters. "It is a cruel thing," he once said, "for the poor labourer to be obliged to part with all his pig, after nourishing it as a daughter and letting it lie in his bosom. When they ask me to buy a bit, I buy two — one for myself, the other for them: they are so grateful and so pleased." Proofs that he was popular among them were often given. Having gone one day to speak to a friend at the Magistrates' meeting, in coming out he was surrounded by a crowd of people, one of whom said to him, "I hope, sir, you will attend the meeting to-day." "No, I do not understand magistrates' business." "Yes, sir," answered a man, "*you* are the poor man's magistrate."

The following letters, written between 1822 and 1826, may find a place here.

To Mrs. Buxton.

"March 30. 1822.

"I have the satisfaction to find that Government have finally consented to grant pensions to the wives of insane officers; and really if I do nothing but this in Parliament I shall not think my time or labour or money misspent; for the effect will be to render many a poor family comfortable and easy. On the other hand, I have the great dissatisfaction of finding great impediments with regard to the Prison Bill. However, I feel comfortable,

and am going to dine with the Duke of Gloucester to-day. John Ribbons is much to blame in not going to church, and must do it. He must not kill a rook on any consideration. I trust they will enjoy their matrimonial life; and I feel quite vexed at the idea of their being molested; in short, he must kill nothing but vermin."

To a Friend.

"London, April 16. 1823.

"I will take an early opportunity of moving for the account of the stations, and for the number of lives saved by the use of Captain Manby's apparatus; but the purpose of my writing at present is of a different nature. You say 'Pathos is not, in any sense, in my composition,' and you intimated in our conversation last Sunday, that you felt fit for the drudgery of stating facts, but not possessed of the art of giving to your statements entertainment and interest. Now, this is utterly and without reserve untrue. The fact is, that all persons, if they set about it aright, have the capacity of conveying their feelings to others. * * * Honestly speaking, however, I do think there is a certain degree of languor and want of vivacity in your studied productions; and I am sure I know the cause. You imagine, when you appear before the public, that you must appear in full dress, correct to a nicety—precise to a hair; and that artless, native naïveté, and undressed good humour, are unbefitting so solemn an occasion as an address to the public: in all which you are eminently deceived. You are of opinion that the public is so sagacious a creature as to require only bare facts; that he wants no more ornament or entertainment than a mathematician. Now, believe me, the public neither can or will receive into his obtuse understanding anything which is not conveyed through the medium of his imagination or his feelings; and if you want to move him you must address yourself to those only openings through which he is assailable. All the observations I have made in life—all the persons who have succeeded, and all those who have failed, furnish proofs of this. I will, however, only give you one. Dr. Lawrence, a man of great learning and talents, used to make speeches in the House, admirable for their facts, but to which no man ever attended except Fox: he was always seen sitting in the attitude of deep attention; and when asked the

reason, he said, 'Because I mean to speak this speech over again.' He actually did so; and those facts, which from Dr. Lawrence were unbearably heavy, moved and delighted the House from Fox, and insured certain and silent attention from all. Why? Because Dr. L. thought with you, and Fox had the good fortune to agree with me!

"Now, then, the application of all this. You ought to study the art of composition—the means of conveying to the world your own views and feelings. I am sure, from your habits of research, and your literary powers and opportunities, *you may do a great deal of good;* but you are bound to do your best to effect that object, in the way by which alone it can be accomplished—by *tickling the fancy* of the public.

* * * * *

"First, I should advise you in writing to put down the native, gay effusions of your own mind; and to avoid destroying their effect by a cold, correct emendation.

"Secondly, I would advise you to study composition;—'but where?' In Cicero, in Quinctilian, in Chesterfield's Letters (you will smile at the assembly), in the three papers on the Speech of Demosthenes in the Edinburgh Review, in South's Sermons, Junius's Letters, and the Spectator. Imbibe the spirit of these, and I will venture to assert that the public will feel as you feel, and respond to any appeal you make to them."

John Henry North, Esq., to T. Fowell Buxton, Esq.

"My dear Buxton, "Barmouth, Sept. 1. 1823.

"I have at length sat down to perform a lawyer's duty, to explain things inexplicable; *to wit,* why I have not written to you before, or why I am writing to you now, or why I am writing to you from this place. When the circuit ended, and left me at liberty to think of recreation, I embarked myself, my wife, a gig and horse, and, without other incumbrance or accommodation, have been moving about in broken weather and on mountain roads, till I found a sheltering-place here. Here, too, I have had the good fortune to meet with your venerable friend Mr. Wilberforce. To-day I had the pleasure of walking with him for half an hour, when he spoke of you with all the warmth

and affection that I anticipated. It quite delights me to receive the unvarying testimony which comes to me from all quarters of your well-earned reputation; and I enjoyed in a peculiar manner the high tribute which he paid you, because I know you are considered as his natural successor in the House of Commons. You have a boldness, spirit, and intrepidity that fit you for rougher warfare than he ever ventured to engage in; and public opinion, more powerful and enlightened now than in his time, will support you in attempting the great objects you have in view by more direct and expeditious methods than it would have been wise in him to adopt. Yes, Buxton, I do hope that we shall labour together yet in rooting out the Slave Trade in every quarter of the globe; in improving or perfecting the Criminal Law of England, and in emancipating, educating, and civilising my unfortunate countrymen.

"I suppose you have heard that I am an Orangeman, and that my health is drunk next after the Protestant ascendancy; but my opinions on the state of Ireland, and the policy it requires, remain unchanged. Lord Wellesley and Plunket have made sad work of it.

"When I tell you that twenty miles a day is the utmost that I can impel my horse, you will admit the impracticability of my crossing the island to Norfolk. I wish you had some of my roving disposition, or that there was good shooting on the marshes of Wales, and we might yet spend three or four days pleasantly together. Of our old friends I have no news. Strong you see from time to time in London. Stock is Stock; everything else alters, but he remains immoveable. He is unchanged too in his friendships, and feels the same warm regard for you and me that he ever felt. Wray is a Senior Fellow, and surprised the college by the excellence of his fellowship examinations. Robinson has married and accepted a living.

"I do not know with what face I can ask you to write to me, but one can be very impudent upon paper. * * * We have a friend here, the most amiable of men — a Mr. M'Ghee, a young clergyman. He is quite devoted to religion; and his views coincide entirely with what I believe to be yours. In the pulpit he is nearly the most eloquent preacher I ever heard. He is a friend of Mr. Wilberforce, who came here at his suggestion. If he should ever have an opportunity of seeing you, let this letter

be an introduction to him. My dear Buxton, may God bless you and your dear family, and my dear friend Mrs. Buxton, and long preserve you to the cause of humanity, patriotism, and religion!

"Your ever affectionate friend,
"JOHN HENRY NORTH."

Mr. Wilberforce writes at the same period: —

"My dear Buxton, "Barmouth, Sept. 3. 1823.

"Oh, how much I wish you and yours were all at this place! If you have any passion for rocks and mountains, here it might be gratified to the utmost of your desires. And there is another, and, to your friendly heart, I know a still more powerful attraction, in the person of Mr. North, the Irish barrister, who is staying here with his lady (the sister of Leslie Forster) for a short time. I own I had formed a very different idea of his exterior and manners. Your Irish man of genius commonly has somewhat volcanic about him; flash and fertility, and now and then a puff of smoke too, though often also with fine coruscations and aspirations of flame and starry scintillations; but North's manner is so quiet, and soft, and insinuating, that I should never have guessed him to be an Irishman; you cannot hear him converse, even for a few minutes, without conceiving both respect and regard for him.

* * * * * *

"My dear friend, I don't like to conclude without one serious word. Indeed, were I to do so, my letter would be a very unfaithful picture of my mind, and a letter to a friend ought to be quite a copy of it; for my most affectionate thoughts and feelings about you and yours are serious, far above the region of levities and frivolities. May it please God, my dear friend, to bless you with a long course of usefulness, and honour, and comfort; and may you and I, and all that are most dear to us respectively, after having filled up our appointed course, according to the will of God, in his faith, and fear, and love, as redeemed and grateful purchases of the blood of Christ, be received into that world of peace, and love, and joy, where all will be holiness and happiness for evermore! So wishes, so prays,

"Your sincere and affectionate friend,
"W. WILBERFORCE."

T. F. Buxton, Esq., to a Friend.

"Feb. 24. 1825.

"We have had a most noble debate on Ireland. Burdett's and Canning's speeches were superlative. As an object of ambition, there is nothing to compare with such exertions; and there was a time when my bosom burned to achieve them; but that folly is defunct. After all they are but an object of ambition; they convey no reality of honour or of happiness. Falstaff and I are exactly of the same opinion on the subject of reputation. I shall speak as well as I can for usefulness, but not for fame; my serious opinion being, that good woodcock shooting is a preferable thing to glory."

"Feb. 25. 1825.

"Martin brought forward last night a new cruelty bill. Sir M. Ridley and another member opposed it, and I evidently saw that there was so much disposition to sneer at and make game of Martin, that the bears and dogs would suffer. Up I got, and when I found myself on my legs I asked myself this cutting question: — Have you any thing to say? 'Not a syllable,' was the answer from within; but necessity has no law; speak I must, and so I did. I began with challenging my share of the sneers and obloquy which had been cast on Martin. * * * We saved the bill, and all the dogs in England and bears in Christendom ought to howl us a congratulation."

To a gentleman who had asked for the secretaryship of a mining company for a friend, saying, "He had been a brave officer:" —

"April 17. 1825.

"You say he is brave; what has that to do with the mines? We don't want to fight the silver. Is he a vigorous, energetic dog, who will conquer difficulties? Is he a sharp, clear-headed man, who will not let us be cheated? Is he a man who will do business? Is he a good-tempered man, who will quarrel with nobody? You naval gentlemen think of nothing but courage, and think you have given the most special recommendation when you assure us that your friend is most perfectly ready to knock out his neighbour's brains; whereas we cowardly landsmen are not so fond of fighting, or fighting men."

To a friend who had remonstrated with him on speaking too strongly to a person in power on the subject of slavery—

"1826.

"I cannot leave London without acknowledging the receipt of your letter, though I am not very well.

"Our conversation has left a kind of double impression on my mind. I am glad I spoke out. I have made it a sacred rule to myself never to change my opinion of a man for whom I felt a friendship, without telling him to his face what I had to object against him. I have sometimes found myself altogether mistaken; and often, if not always, there has been something to be said on the other side which I had not anticipated. I am not aware that I ever had a quarrel with any one who had been my friend, and to this good rule I owe my preservation. I am glad, therefore, that I did not disguise what had been long and much on my mind. It is to me matter of amazement that any man of principle can materially differ with me on the subject of slavery. I wonder when I see an honest man who does not hate it as I do, who does not long for the opportunity of giving it a death-blow; and as I cannot believe that any change of circumstances could make me any thing but a favourer, and well-wisher, and encourager to those who were devoted to that duty, I am quite perplexed by finding that there are persons who look upon me, because thus engaged, with an unfriendly eye. —— is a man for whom I have ever entertained both respect and liking; I am therefore glad I hazarded the truth; but I am not glad that I did it in so strong a manner. I did not tell my whole mind. I wished to have said that I was very sorry I could not acknowledge many services he had rendered to our cause; but I wished to have said this in sorrow, not in anger: and if I left the impression that I had any feeling of enmity towards him I did myself great injustice."

To a Clergyman.

"My dear Friend, "Cromer Hall, Aug. 22. 1826.

"I very much wish you would come into Norfolk, for I really want to have a conversation with you; and it is odd enough that it is upon a business entirely yours, with which I

have no kind of concern. I remember two observations of yours, which, little as I might appear to heed them at the time, made a deep impression on me. The one was, 'I should very much like to be a country gentleman. I would not have the best horses, or dogs, or farms, in the county; but I would exert myself to improve the people who were under my influence. A country gentleman, thus employed, *totis viribus*, might accomplish a vast range of good.' The other was, when you said to one of your parishioners who was fond of music, 'I, too, love music; I hope to enjoy a great deal of it, but I will wait till I get to heaven.' Now, having had the use of these observations for some years, I feel bound to return them to you for your use and benefit, for it strikes me you want them just at this time. I hear you are going to build a house; no doubt you will do it with excellent taste; then it will require to be suitably furnished; then the grounds must be improved about it, and by that time your heart will be in it. I am sure that house will lead to your secularisation. It will melt you down towards an ordinary country parson; not the parson who loves his dinner and his claret, but rather towards that refined class of triflers, who exquisitely embellish houses and gardens, and who leave the minds and souls of their flocks to take care of themselves. You see I have scratched out 'into' and inserted 'towards,' because I am bound in truth to confess, that I am sure you will, under any circumstances, and in spite of all seductions, be an exemplary clergyman. You will have your schools, and your weekday services, and your sound, lively, evangelical doctrine in the pulpit; but what I mean to say is, that just so much of your affections as you give to your house, exactly so much will you withdraw from your parish.

"After all, the discharge of a man's duty, and, *à fortiori*, of a clergyman's duty, requires all the strength we can give it. The world, and the spirit of the world, are very insidious, and the older we grow the more inclined are we to think as others think, and act as others act; and more than once I have seen a person, who, as a youth, was single-eyed and single-hearted, and who, to any one who supposed he might glide into laxity of zeal, would have said 'Am I a dog?' in maturer age become, if not a lover of the vices of the world, at least a tolerator of its vanities. I speak here feelingly, for the world has worn away

much of the little zeal I ever had. 'What is the harm,' you will say, 'of a convenient house: what is the harm of a convenient house being elegant; of an elegant house being suitably furnished?' The same personage who insinuates this to you, said to me, 'Where is the harm of having a few dogs—those few very good? you preserve game—do it well—do it better than other people:' and so he stole away my heart from better things. I have more game and better horses and dogs than other people, but the same energy, disposed of in a different way, might have spread Bible and Missionary Societies over the Hundred of North Erpingham.

"All this applies to you, more than to any person I know. You have, by a singular dispensation of Providence, obtained a station of influence; you have a vigour and alacrity of mind with which few are gifted; upon no man's heart is 'the vanity of this life' more strongly stamped. You have a great, as far as my experience goes, an unequalled influence over those around you. These together constitute great power of doing good. The question is, shall you give it wholly to God, walking through life as one who really despises the indulgences on which others set their hearts,—acting fully up to your own creed, and the convictions of your better moments,—or will you give two-thirds of that power to God, and one-third of it to the world? Will you have your music here, or will you wait a few years for it? Old Wesley said, when called upon, according to the Act of Parliament, to give an account of his service of plate, in order to be taxed, 'I have five silver spoons; these are all I have, and all I mean to have, while my poor neighbours want bread.' That is the spirit which becomes a minister. Will you say, twenty years hence, to Death, when he pays you a visit, 'I built this house—by the confession of all men a parsonage in the purest taste; I selected these pictures: observe the luxuriance of the trees I planted; just do me the favour to notice the convenience of this library, and the beauty of the prospect from that window?' or will you say, 'I have spent my days in this homely habitation, where there is nothing for luxury to enjoy or taste to admire; but there is my parish, not a child there but can read the Bible, and loves it too: in every house there is prayer, in every heart there is an acknowledgment of Christ, and that he came into the world to

save sinners?' I do not mean to say, even if you build your house, that when that epoch arrives you will not be able to show a very good parish, as well as a very good parsonage; I only mean to say, that the house and the parish will be the inverse of each other, the better the house, the worse the parish. The less you surround yourself with accommodations, the less you conform yourself to the taste of the multitude, the more exclusively, and the more powerfully, you will do your own work.

"No man has a surplus of power: meaning by power—time, talents, money, influence. There is room for the exercise of all, and more than all, which the most affluent possesses. Perhaps one parish is enough for the full employment of this power; if not, the neighbourhood will take off the redundance; if not, there are three quarters of the world, which are heathen, and want his aid. There, at least, is full occupation for the wealth of his mind, and his purse. It is therefore, arithmetically true, that so much as he devotes to the secular object he withdraws from the spiritual. It is not more clear, that a man having a large hungry farm for his livelihood, and a garden for his recreation, that as much manure as he spreads on his garden, of so much he deprives his fields. He grows more flowers and less bread. But this is not all; it is not merely the quantum of his force which he thus wastes; that is the least part of his loss. He touches the world at one point, and the infection reaches him by the contact. If he resembles others in his house, why not in his table? why not in his society? why not in anything which is not positively wrong?

"Now every word of this sermon is inconsistent with my own practice; but never mind that; truth is truth, whoever speaks it.

"It may be a way—

> 'Out of this wreck to rise in,
> A sure and safe one, though thy master missed it.'

"But why do I write all this to you? solely because I have the highest opinion of you and your powers. I have watched your course now for many years with interest; and I am very desirous that the Rector of A—— should equal the Curate of B——. The objects of vulgar care, and the pursuits of vulgar ambition, are not for you. I hope to see in your parish an

example of what may be done by a clergyman having talents, income, influence, out of the common order. It just occurs to me that all this may be misapplied, that your house has not, and is not likely to have, a tittle of your affections. Be it so — then give this letter to your housemaid to light your fire with. But if you suspect that you want the friendly freedom of this hint, in the midst of your present prosperity, keep this as a memorial of the attachment of

"Yours, very truly,
"T. F. BUXTON."

CHAPTER XI.

1826, 1827.

THE MAURITIUS SLAVE TRADE. — MR. BYAM AND GENERAL HALL. — MR. BUXTON STUDIES AND UNDERTAKES THE QUESTION. — TOUCHING INCIDENT. — DEBATE. — COMMITTEE OF INQUIRY. — STORMY ELECTION AT WEYMOUTH. — LETTERS. — LABORIOUS INVESTIGATIONS. — FRIGHTFUL ATTACK OF ILLNESS. — UNEXPECTED RECOVERY.

THE year of trial, granted by the Government to the colonial legislatures, suspended during that time all anti-slavery proceedings. This interval was not thrown away — Mr. Buxton at once turned his whole mind to a new, though kindred question.

A few months previously he had received a visit from a gentleman of the name of Byam, who had been commissary-general of the police at the Mauritius, and had come home full of indignation at the abuses he had there witnessed. He asserted that the slave-trade was still prevailing in that island to a frightful extent; that the inhabitants and the authorities were alike implicated, and that the labouring slaves were treated with atrocious cruelty; the greater, because their loss could be so easily supplied.

The Mauritius* had not been ceded to England by France till 1810, which was three years after the abolition of the British slave-trade. It appeared that, partly owing to this circumstance, and partly to the

* The Mauritius was discovered in 1505, by Mascaregnas, a Portuguese. It received its name from that of the ship of Van Neck, a Dutchman, who first settled on it in 1595. The story of Paul and Virginia throws a romantic interest over this rich and beautiful island.

facilities afforded by the proximity of the African coast, the traffic had never been put down in those quarters, except during one or two brief intervals.

To these startling assertions Mr. Buxton could not yield immediate belief; still less could he refuse to investigate them. From Mr. Byam, and other individuals, especially General Hall (who had been a governor of the Mauritius), he obtained a large mass of documents, and after a long and minute study of their contents he came to the certain conviction that the charge was true. He was appalled by the greatness of the evil thus unveiled to him. It was no light matter, however, to begin a struggle with a foe so distant and inaccessible, and at first he shrank from the undertaking. But how could he know of such iniquities without standing up against them? At that time he little thought that in six years British slavery would be done away. He expected a far more lengthened contest; and, meanwhile, should these horrors be permitted to continue? — No! A year's leisure lay before him, and in conjunction with Dr. Lushington and others, he took the task in hand.

A plan of operation was soon laid, in accordance with which Mr. (now Sir) George Stephen, a stanch and hereditary abolitionist, took upon himself the labour, demanding no less skill than perseverance, of discovering and examining witnesses.* The first of these was Mrs. Byam's English maid-servant, who, while in the

* Mr. Buxton used to relate a conversation as having occurred at his own table in connection with this question, which much amused him. A gentleman who had been resident in the Mauritius, one day dining with him, laboured to set him right as to the condition of the slaves, assuring him that the blacks there were in fact the happiest people in the whole world. He finished by appealing to his wife. "Now, my dear, you saw Mr. T——'s slaves; do tell Mr. Buxton how happy they looked." "Well, yes," innocently replied the lady, "they were very happy, I'm sure: — only I used to think it *so* odd to see the black cooks chained to the fireplace!"

Mauritius, had done various little acts of kindness to the slaves.

One incident related by her powerfully affected Mr. Buxton. In the middle of the night preceding the departure of Mr. Byam's family from the island, she was awakened by a low voice calling to her from without; she rose, and was terrified at finding the whole court-yard filled with negroes. They beseechingly beckoned her to be still, and then, falling upon their knees, they implored her, as she was going to the country of Almighty God, to tell Him of their sufferings, and to entreat Him to send them relief.

On the 9th of May, 1826, Mr. Buxton brought the Mauritius question before Parliament. In the commencement of his speech he reminded the House that the traffic in slaves was by law a felony. "And yet," he continued: —

"I stand here to assert, that in a British colony, for the last fourteen years, except during General Hall's brief administration, the slave trade in all its horrors has existed: that it has been carried on to the extent of thousands, and tens of thousands; that, except upon one or two occasions, which I will advert to, there has been a regular, systematic, and increasing importation of slaves."

He then proceeded to prove this statement, adducing the evidence of one admiral and four naval captains, one general and three military officers, five high civil officers, and two out of the three governors of the island; and then, from calculations which he had very fully and accurately made, he proved every one of the eight distinct heads of accusation which he had brought forward. By a return of the number of the black population in the Seychelles, he showed that there was only

one alternative, either the slave-trade had been carried on, or every female in that group of islands must have been the mother of one hundred and eighty children.* He concluded his speech by sketching with a powerful hand the features of the trade which he was attacking (and let the reader, while perusing the following extract, remember that the same barbarities are going on at this very day, between the west coast of Africa and the Brazils).

After describing the system of capture, &c. he said,—

"The fourth step is the voyage, the horrors of which are beyond description. For example, the mode of packing. The hold of a slave-vessel is from two to four feet high. It is filled with as many human beings as it will contain. They are made to sit down with their heads between their knees; first, a line is placed close to the side of the vessel; then another line, and then the packer, armed with a heavy club, strikes at the feet of this last line, in order to make them press as closely as possible against those behind. And so the packing goes on, until, to use the expression of an eye-witness, 'they are wedged together in one mass of living corruption.' Then the stench is so dreadful that I am assured by an officer, that holding his head for a few moments over the air-hole was almost fatal to his life. Thus it is that—suffocating for want of air,—starving for want of food,—parched with thirst for want of water,—these poor creatures are compelled to perform a voyage of fourteen hundred miles. No wonder the mortality is dreadful!"

He obtained a select committee to inquire whether the slave-trade had or had not existed in the Mauritius. But its investigations were soon arrested by the dissolution of Parliament; and, in the beginning of June, Mr. Buxton found himself involved in a stormy election at Weymouth, which at that time, with the united borough of Melcombe Regis, returned four members. The non-

* Hansard, P. D. xv. p. 1030.

electors and the mob were in favour of the Tory candidates, and resorted to main force to prevent the polling of the Whig votes. Their plan was, with the aid of a large body of stout Portlanders, to obtain possession of the Town Hall, at the further extremity of which the booth was placed. No Whig voter reached the table without a violent struggle and very rough treatment. Some were delayed for hours, first by this means, and then by the objections urged by the lawyers; and so great was the success of all this, that on one day but six votes were polled. To remedy in some degree this evil, the mayor extended the hours of polling from 4 to 6 o'clock. This measure was extremely unpopular with the mobility of the place, who, of course, wished the election to last as many days as possible. It was rumoured that an attack on the Town Hall was in contemplation, and a strong body of cavalry was called into the town. The mob, however, were not dismayed. At 4 o'clock they assembled in great force, and suddenly rushed with a loud yell upon the door of the Town Hall. Some passed under the horses of the soldiers, others pressed between them; the ranks of the cavalry were broken, and the crowd poured in. At the same moment a great number of them ran over the leads of the houses adjoining the Town Hall, lowered themselves from the roof into its upper windows, and came tumbling into the Hall in crowds, rushing towards the polling-booth with loud shouts, and pressing back the gentlemen to the further end. Most of these scrambled out of the windows at once; a few kept their seats till they were almost suffocated by the mob, but were forced at last to jump from the windows into the arms of their friends below. Subsequently a large number of special con-

stables were sworn in and placed in the Hall. On two successive days the mob broke all their staves to pieces, and drove them out with great violence.

Mr. Buxton kept himself as clear as possible from these tumults: his own election was throughout secure, and he was personally highly popular. He is described as being received, even by the Tories, "with loud shouts of approbation; crowds came about him to shake hands; indeed," adds the letter, "he does not appear to have a person against him in the town."

The election lasted fifteen days, at the end of which he was at the head of the poll by a majority of sixty-nine; but the other Whig candidate was defeated, and three Tories came in.

To Samuel Hoare, Esq.

"Weymouth, June 16. 1826.

"This is the sixth day of polling, and there is every probability of six days more. The election is carried on with the utmost violence, and at *monstrous* expense. It is said that —— spends 1500*l.* a day; his party confess to 1000*l.* He has nine public houses open, where anybody, male or female, from town or country, is very welcome to eat and get drunk; and, the truth is, the whole town is drunk. I send you a copy of a letter which I wrote to the chairman of our committee yesterday, protesting against any such proceedings on our side."

The letter referred to is as follows: —

"My dear Sir, "Weymouth, June 15. 1826.

"I wish to repeat to you in writing, what I stated to you several times, and what I declared yesterday on the hustings; I will be no party to any expenses which are contrary to law. I will pay no part of the expense of opening houses. If any individual on his own responsibility does so, pray let him clearly understand that he will hereafter have no claim upon me. It is contrary to my principles to obtain any accession of strength by illegal means. I will not do it, and will not sanction it. I

request you will make this communication known to the candidates, the agents, and the committee."

To Joseph John Gurney, Esq.

(Who had offered to share in the expenses of the election.)

"Spitalfields, July 18. 1826.

"I was very much pleased with your letter. That kind of community of feeling and interest which subsists between us all is a rare, a good, and a most pleasant thing; and, under certain circumstances, I should have no kind of indisposition to be aided by you and the rest. My clear opinion, however, is, that there is no necessity for it at this time. I feel warranted in depriving my family of the sum my election will cost, considering the very peculiar situation in which the slave question, the Mauritius question, and the Suttee (Indian Widows) question stand. Without extravagantly overrating my own usefulness, I think it would be inconvenient for me to be out of Parliament just now. There are plenty of people with more talents, but a great lack of those who truly love a good cause for its own sake, and whom no price would detach from it; and so for this time I feel warranted in robbing my family. I therefore decline your most generous offer to assist in my election expenses; and I do so with many thanks, and with great pleasure that the offer was made.*

"I am very, very sorry I cannot join Wilberforce at Earlham; nothing prevents me except the Mauritius question, and that to him will be a pretty good reason.

"I shall not be at Cromer Hall till early in August, so despatch the Aylsham Bible Society without me; I am sick of public duties, and run away from them without scruple."

The rest of the year 1826 was chiefly employed in the laborious task of preparing Mauritian evidence for the ensuing session. For this purpose Mr. G. Stephen visited every part of England where soldiers were

* Mr. Samuel Gurney and Mr. Joseph J. Gurney several times bore a large part of his election expenses. They insisted on doing this, being determined to promote in every way, direct and indirect, the objects he had at heart.

quartered who had at any time served in the Mauritius. The depositions of both officers and men at Hull, Norwich, Liverpool, Chelsea, and other places were taken; thus the testimony was produced of 320 witnesses of good character, who all spoke to the fact of a trade in slaves. Early in 1827, Mr. Buxton moved for a renewal of the committee; but, at the request of the Government, his motion was deferred till the 26th of May, and, meantime, he strenuously exerted himself in the further investigation of the case.

In his speech on the 9th of May, 1826, he had accused the authorities of the island of culpable neglect. This was highly resented by the late governor, Sir Robert Farquhar, who, in the beginning of May, 1827, complained in the House of Commons of the charge, and dared Mr. Buxton to the proof. This entailed upon him what he had hoped to avoid, the painful necessity of individual crimination. But he was already almost sinking under the weight of business, and the anxiety with which the whole case was fraught proved at length more than he could bear. His health showed decided symptoms of giving way, and his physician, Dr. Farre, strongly urged him to have recourse to rest and quiet; but he was far too deeply impressed by the sufferings of his unhappy clients to desert their cause while a particle of strength remained. In spite of the feelings of illness which rapidly gained ground upon him, he spent the week previous to that on which his motion was to come on in severe and harassing labour. One of his friends writes on Tuesday, May 15th, 1827:—

"I went to breakfast with Mr. Buxton, but he was too ill to come down stairs, and Dr. Farre was sent for. Presently, however, General Hall, Mr. George Stephen, and Mr. Byam

arriving, he joined the party. A large sheet of paper, full of notes, was produced, and they were soon immersed in business. He appeared much oppressed with headache, and very languid. * * * When Dr. Farre arrived he ordered leeches, quiet, and total abstinence from business. I then was about to go, but Mr. Buxton said I must stay and read to him, which I did for many hours. The book was 'Thompson's Journey in South Africa.' At night he seemed very ill."

As he continued seriously unwell, and business necessarily pressed upon him in London, he removed on the Thursday afternoon to Ham House, whence he wrote the following note to Mrs. Upcher:—

"My dear Friend,

"I am far better, but rather feeble and incapable of exertion, and somewhat perplexed by the question,—Ought I to overwork myself, or underwork my slave cause? My judgment is for the second, but my inclination for the first; and the result will be that I shall do both. I am now going to take a ride."

His prediction was but too true. He spent the Saturday in taking a general view of the evidence which had been collected of the atrocious cruelties practised upon the negroes both in their importation and afterwards, when they were reduced to slavery. In the course of that unhappy morning he was so completely overwhelmed with anguish and indignation at the horrors on which he had been dwelling, that he several times left his papers and paced rapidly up and down the lawn entirely overcome by his feelings, and exclaiming aloud, "Oh, it's too bad, it's too bad! I can't bear it."

The frightful result which ensued is thus forcibly described by himself, some months afterwards:—

* * * "Last spring the whole force of my mind and all my faculties were engaged in preparing for the Mauritius question.

I had pledged myself to prove that the slave trade had existed and flourished in that colony, that the state of slavery there was pre-eminently cruel, and that persons of eminence had tolerated these enormities. It is, I think, but justice to myself to admit that the object was a worthy one; that I had embraced it from a sense of duty; that my mind was embued with deep affliction and indignation at the wrongs to which the negro was exposed. I spared no pains and no sacrifices, in order to do justice to my cause; and the anxiety and labour which I endured preyed upon my health. About the middle of May I went to Upton, in order to improve it by change of air; but I was then under the pressure of disease, and my physician described my state by saying, 'You are on fire, though you are not in a blaze.' I concealed from others, I did not even admit to myself, the extent of my indisposition. I could not doubt that I felt ill, but I was willing to suppose that these were nervous feelings, the effects of fatigue of mind, and that they would vanish, as they had often done before, when the exertion was at an end.

"On Saturday, May 19th, I took a survey of the case of cruelty to the negroes, and for two or three hours I was distressed beyond measure, and as much exasperated as distressed, by that scene of cruelty and horrid oppression. I never in my life was so much moved by anything, and I was so exhausted by the excitement that I could not that day renew my exertions. The next morning I awoke feeling very unwell. My wife and the family went to a place of worship, and my daughter remained with me; I think, but I have not any clear recollections, that I told her about 12 o'clock to send for Dr. Farre. I have a vague idea of my wife's return, but beyond that all is lost to me. The fact was, that I was seized with a fit of apoplexy, and it was not till the following Wednesday that I showed any symptoms of recovery. I am glad that the first object I noticed was my dear wife. I well remember the expression of deep anxiety upon her countenance, and I am sure I had seen it before. To her delight I spoke to her, and the words I used were those that expressed my unbounded affection towards her. Thanks to her care, joined to that of my brothers and sisters and of the medical attendants, I gradually recovered. I remember, however, feeling some surprise, as well as mortifi-

cation, at finding that the day fixed for my motion on the Mauritius had passed. Then came the slow progress of recovery; we went to Cromer; all my pursuits, such at least as required mental exertion, were given up, but hence resulted some leisure for reflection. I was then sensible of the sins which I had committed, and was deeply affected by the love and mercy of God, that He had been pleased to spare my life, that he had not called me suddenly into his presence. I hope and believe that I have not lost the sense of his goodness. I never can advert to this warning without acknowledging from my heart that his goodness and mercy have followed me all the days of my life. O gracious Father, grant that I may always retain a most lively feeling of the indulgence and tender compassion which I have experienced at thy hands. Give me repentance, even bitter repentance, that I have ever offended so gracious a Master, and keep me from future transgression."

So deeply had the subject which caused this alarming illness become rooted in his mind, that almost his first words, on recovering full consciousness, were uttered in a decided tone, to the effect that he must get up and go to the House, to bring forward his motion on the Mauritius. When told that the day was already past, he would not give credit to the statement till it was put beyond doubt by reference to the newspaper in which the proceedings of the House on the evening in question were reported.

Such was the history of this remarkable check in the very midst of his career. It need not be said how strong a sensation his illness occasioned both among his immediate friends and fellow-workers, and in a wider circle also. His brothers and sisters collected around him, his children were sent for from a distance, and the strongest alarm was felt until his almost unlooked-for return to consciousness.

"What a change," writes Mr. Macaulay on the 6th of June, "has the mercy of God to us all produced! We have almost

ceased to inquire from hour to hour, and day to day, with breathless solicitude, about every little symptom that might have occurred. We now hear only of returning strength, of spirits, and of approaching convalescence. Let us not forget the change. May God establish and perfect it!"

CHAPTER XII.

1827, 1828.

MEDITATIONS. — REV. C. SIMEON. — LETTER TO LORD W. BENTINCK. — SUTTEE ABOLISHED. — MR. BUXTON REMOVES TO NORTHREPPS. — DEBATE ON SLAVERY. — MR. BUXTON'S REPLY. — THE FREE PEOPLE OF COLOUR. — INTERVIEW WITH MR. HUSKISSON. — THOUGHTS ON HIS ILLNESS.

THE Mauritius case was of course dropped for the year. Mr. Buxton returned to Cromer Hall, and for a long time was obliged to relinquish all sedentary occupation. This interval of unaccustomed leisure was not thrown away; his mind, cut off from its usual employments, turned to reviewing its own state; and while removed from active life, he was in fact strengthening by reflection and prayer those principles from which his actions sprang. Much larger portions of time were given to religious meditation, and to a diligent study of the Holy Scriptures. The marks in his Bible attest his ready application of the Word of God to his own necessities. Dates are placed against many passages and memoranda of circumstances to which they had been particularly appropriate. There also exists a large portfolio full of texts, copied by him and arranged under different heads. He greatly delighted in the Psalms; and on one occasion, when, to use his own words, "some circumstances had arisen which involved him in distress of mind," he thus writes:—

"Finding comfort nowhere else, I resorted to the Bible, and particularly to the Psalms; and truly can I say with David, 'In my distress I called upon the Lord, and he delivered me.' The Psalms are beautiful and instructive to every man who

really studies them; but anguish of mind is necessary to enable us fully to comprehend and taste the pathos and emphasis of their expressions. In David's descriptions of his own anxieties, I found a most lively picture of my own mind. In his eloquent language I uttered my prayers, and, thanks be to God! I was also able to use for myself his songs of rejoicing and gratitude. I have spent some hours almost every Sunday over the Psalms, and I have extracted, under separate heads, David's prayers—his assurance that his prayers were heard and answered—his thanksgivings, &c.; and I meditate, at some future period of leisure, preparing some work for publication on the subject.

"This I may, I believe, say, that these studies have had a strong, and I trust not a transient, effect upon my mind. I recur to the Bible with a pleasure and sometimes with a delight unknown to me before. When I am out of heart, I follow David's example, and fly for refuge to prayer, and he furnishes me with a store of prayer; and I hope 'I love God' better, 'because he hath heard the voice of my supplication; and therefore will I call upon him as long as I live;' and I feel what the text expresses, which I found in my text-book for this day, 'The Lord is my defence, and my God is the rock of my refuge.' And this lesson I have in some degree learnt, that afflictions, as we consider them, are sometimes the chief and the choicest of mercies."

When in Norfolk the woods were his chosen retreat for the enjoyment of the "divine silence," as he called it, of the country. He would take his small well-marked Bible, and wander among the trees, reflecting deeply on what he read, and if his retirement were broken in upon, he would say it was much too soon, he had not gone through half his subjects of thought. Although he never kept a diary, yet after his illness he was in the habit of frequently committing his thoughts to paper, and a very large number of these communings with his own heart still remain. Many of them are preparations for prayer, according to a habit which he thus mentions in one of his papers about this period:—

* * * * *

"There is a practice which I have found highly beneficial, and should any of my children ever see this memorial, I earnestly advise them to adopt it.

"I am in the habit of preparing the substance of my private and family prayers. I believe that we are far too extempore in that duty; not that I recommend any verbal preparation, but a meditation upon the points on which we wish to ask the help of God. The want of this seems to me to lead the mind to wander about, and rather to fill our mouths with a train of words to which we are accustomed than our hearts with a sense of our necessities. I, at least, have found the habit of reflecting on what I shall ask for, before I venture to ask, highly serviceable.

"I am bound to acknowledge that I have always found that my prayers have been heard and answered—not that I have in every instance (though in almost every instance I have) received what I asked for, nor do I expect or wish it. I always qualify my petitions by adding, provided that what I ask for is for my real good and according to the will of my Lord. But with this qualification I feel at liberty to submit my wants and wishes to God in small things as well as in great; and I am inclined to imagine that there are no "little things" with Him. We see that his attention is as much bestowed upon what we call trifles, as upon those things which we consider of mighty importance. His hand is as manifest in the feathers of a butterfly's wing, in the eye of an insect, in the folding and packing of a blossom*, in the curious aqueducts by which a leaf is nourished, as in the creation of a world and in the laws by which the planets move.

"To our limited powers some things appear great and some inconsiderable; but He, infinite in all things, can lavish His power and His wisdom upon every part of his creation. Hence I feel permitted to offer up my prayers, for everything that concerns me. I understand literally the injunction, 'be careful for nothing, but in everything—make your requests known unto God;' and I cannot but notice how amply these prayers have

* He continually pointed out the packing of buds and leaves as beautiful proofs of the Divine wisdom and goodness; so that Mrs. Hoare's children used to call the early spring buds "Uncle Buxton's sermons."

been met. Grant then, O Lord, that I may never fail to pour forth all my burthens, cares, wishes, wants, before thy throne, that I may love to seek thy help."

To Mrs. Buxton.

"Hampstead, July 25. 1827.

"It is now a little past 7 o'clock, and as I am up according to my new fashion, I will tell you that I spent a very pleasant afternoon with Tacy, and much liked his location. He went with me to Dereham the next morning, and I had a nice journey up, reading all the way. * * * And now I must tell you that, reviewing the events of the last few weeks, there are two feelings which rise up in my mind with peculiar force. First, gratitude to Him who has dealt with me with so much true mercy. I think I have some feelings of real thankfulness. I see so plainly the hand of God in what has recently occurred, and so plainly do I discern in them that he is indeed long-suffering and plenteous in mercy, that some degree of warm and lively gratitude springs up in my mind. * * * This is my first feeling, but another has also been my companion. I mean a flow of love and tenderness towards my family. * * * I think my illness has really tended to strengthen the bonds of family affection, and that is no little blessing. And now I must stop to read a few verses in the Bible."

During a visit to Earlham this autumn, in the company of the Rev. Charles Simeon, Mr. Buxton one day persisted in going out shooting, instead of accompanying his friend to a meeting of the Jews' Society in Norwich. Mr. Simeon was a little hurt by this; but receiving not long afterwards a parcel of game, he wrote Mr. Buxton the following characteristic letter.

"King's College, Cambridge,
October 16. 1827.

"My dear Friend,

"A kind present of game demands my grateful acknowledgments, which with much pleasure I send you. But the precise time of its arrival necessarily excites in my mind some reflections. What! is my beloved friend conscious that in withstanding all my extemporaneous oratory he has humbled me — and

does he send me this as a peace-offering? That I have sighed, it is true; that thoughts have arisen in my mind of somewhat a painful nature, is true. And I will tell you what they were:—

"1. I have deeply sympathised with him and his beloved relatives in his affliction.*

"2. My beloved friend has prayed with that dear departed saint, and therefore has doubtless his own soul, perhaps in consequence of his own affliction, in a devout state.

"3. My union with that whole family is near akin to the union of the saints in heaven; and my soul, in consequence of dear Rachel's experience being read to me, had been so in heaven, that I actually felt it a condescension to come down and dine with the party, even though they had all been dukes and duchesses. Peter on Tabor was scarcely more averse to descend than I.

"On these grounds I thought that an act of condescension and self-denial on your part, if self-denial it was, might have been not unseasonable. But I checked and condemned myself, and said, what! shall I wish my beloved friend to serve and honour *God* for my sake? *No!* if he will show kindness to *me* for the *Lord's sake*, I will accept it as the most grateful offering in the world; but to serve *the Lord* for *my* sake would be productive of nothing but grief and shame to my soul.

"Now, my dear friend, you see you have shot me flying, and penetrated my heart, and let out, *not ill blood*, (there is none of that I assure you,) but the stream of love, which was pent up there. And to show that you are pleased with your success, you shall, if convenient to you, send me a little more game to be dressed on Oct. 30., when I shall have a large party of Jews (friends of that despised people) to dine with me; and this will show you in what spirit I write, and with what cordiality and affection I am

"Yours,

"CHARLES SIMEON."

About this time, Mr. Buxton heard, to his great satisfaction, that Lord William Bentinck was appointed

* This refers to the death of his sister-in-law, Rachel Gurney. See Memoir of Elizabeth Fry, vol. ii. p. 55.

Governor-general of India, and immediately went up to town to discuss with him the subject of Suttee, and to urge him to employ his authority for the abolition of that atrocious practice. A short time afterwards he addressed the following letter to him:—

"My dear Lord, "Cromer Hall, October 22. 1827.

"The short interview which I had with you lately has been to me a matter of sincere gratification. I now feel that I can leave in your hand the question, whether the British Government ought, or ought not, to tolerate the annual sacrifice of several hundred females; and I have the satisfaction of knowing that you will do everything which *ought* to be done. When Mr. Canning was going to India, I ventured to trouble him on the business: his answer was the same as I received from you. He assured me, that the subject should engage his most serious attention, and that what he could do should be done. I have always lamented that he did not go to India, from a conviction that his great mind would have been ill at ease, while such horrid customs as Suttee and infanticide prevailed. Forgive me for saying, that I feel the same confidence in your Lordship as I did in Mr. Canning. I enclose you a copy of a letter I received from Lord Hastings. I applied to him, in consequence of hearing from a friend of mine (the Rev. Mr. Glover of this county), that he said 'he should have abolished the practice of Suttee, if he had remained in India another year.' In the letter he says, 'he would have suppressed it if he had been sure of support at home.' Happily there is not the same doubt now as to support at home. In March last, Mr. Poynder moved a resolution at the Court of Proprietors, declaring that it is the duty of the paternal government to interfere to prevent the destruction of human life. Some opposition was made; but the general feeling was too strong to be resisted, and it was carried by a great majority, the minority being only five or six. I venture to send you the report of that debate, and also a publication called the 'Friend of India,' in which there are some valuable papers on the subject, written, I believe, by Dr. Marshman of Serampore. With every wish that you and Lady William may return in safety from India, and that millions may have reason to rejoice that you went there, I have the honour," &c.

To face page 209.

From a Sketch by Mrs. Buxton.

NORTHREPPS HALL.

It is well known that, soon after Lord William Bentinck reached India, he abolished the practice of Suttee at a single blow. Mr. Buxton hailed the news with delight and thankfulness. The evil had indeed been extirpated by the hand of another; but he had the satisfaction of feeling that no opportunity had been wasted by him of forwarding that happy event.

In the course of this winter, Mr. Buxton was obliged, with much regret, to leave Cromer Hall; the proprietor, Mr. Windham, having determined to replace it by a new mansion for his own residence. There was no house equally suitable near Cromer; but being much attached to the neighbourhood, and very unwilling to leave it, he gladly accepted Mr. R. H. Gurney's offer of Northrepps Hall, which, although smaller than his last place of abode, yet possessed many points of attraction; especially, that within a quarter of a mile lived his sister Miss S. M. Buxton, and his cousin Miss Gurney.

Northrepps Cottage, the residence of these ladies, stands in a deep secluded dell, opening on the fishing village of Overstrand and the German Ocean. The path to it from the Hall lies through the woods; and thither he always turned his steps when his spirits needed to be enlivened, or his anxieties shared; well knowing that his presence would ever be hailed with eager delight.

He was scarcely settled at Northrepps, when he was called to London to resume his parliamentary labours, which had been so unfortunately cut short in the preceding year. His still very uncertain health made the prospect of recommencing work an anxious one; and he appeared quite unable to resume his attack on the Mauritius slave trade. "It is a problem to me," he said, "what I shall do this session, and what will happen;" adding, "however, perhaps I shall outlive

you all. I should not wonder, if I do not overwork myself."

His exertions were first called for on behalf of the West Indies. The year of probation granted by Mr. Canning to the colonial assemblies had now more than expired; and they had done nothing towards the mitigation of slavery. Of the eight bills recommended for their adoption by Mr. Canning, *not one* had been accepted by any colony, except Nevis. But the Government were not yet discouraged; they were still anxious to persuade, rather than to compel. Nor could they be blamed for trying every method of suasion, before resorting to force. The right of the mother country to legislate directly for her colonies had, in one great instance, been successfully defied. It might, therefore, have been no wise policy to attempt coercion, till all gentler methods had been tried in vain. Accordingly, in 1828, Sir George Murray, as a last experiment, despatched circular letters to all the colonial assemblies, once more urging them, in strong terms, to effect for themselves the required improvement in the condition of their slaves. Most truly did Mr. Stanley state in his speech on the 14th of May, 1833, that it was not "till all means had been exhausted; till every suggestion had been made; till every warning had been given; and had not only been given in vain, but had been met by the colonial legislatures with the most determined opposition; that England took the work of reconstructing West Indian society into her own hands." These circular letters were "entirely disregarded."

Had Mr. Buxton been in vigorous health, he would certainly have done what he could to obtain bolder measures from the Government, but his bodily powers failed him.

On the 6th of March Mr. Wilmot Horton brought forward a motion for the publication of some minutes relative "to the Demerara and Berbice Manumission Order in Council," to prove the desirableness of its not being enforced.*

Mr. Buxton had brought together some documents from which to answer Mr. Wilmot Horton; but he became so unwell that he was obliged to give up the attempt to peruse them, and went down to the House of Commons without any intention of speaking. To his dismay he found, on reaching the House, that Mr. William Smith was the only abolitionist present beside himself. Mr. Wilmot Horton's opening speech was extremely able, and was listened to by Mr. Buxton with feelings of real distress, while he looked in vain towards the door of the House, in the hope that Mr. Brougham or Dr. Lushington might come to the rescue.

At length a bitter tirade against the Abolitionists from one of their opponents stung him to the quick; and he rose to reply, beginning with somewhat severe comment "on the acrimonious speech of the hon. member for C——, who, after a long lecture on command of temper and control of tongue, has ended," he said, "by charging us with exaggeration, misrepresentation, quackery, and nonsense."

"I must confess, however, that he has sneered at us in very good company: the rights of man and the laws of God were equally visited by his sarcasm. Now, I defy him to prove any one instance of misrepresentation. I challenge him to abstain from general condemnation, and to put his finger upon that particular in which we have deceived the country. I will do so with regard to him — I will mark out those particulars in which he himself has been guilty of misrepresentation."

* Hansard for that date.

He then went through the common assertions of the West Indians—they had denied the existence of flogging; of Sunday markets; of obstacles to manumission; he proved, and from the evidence of the West Indians themselves, that these did exist. His opponents were for ever dwelling on the happiness and comfort of their slaves, —

"But how comes it," he asked, "that these happiest of the happy decrease at a rate entirely unequalled in the history of man? * * * The hon. member has indignantly censured my hon. friend (Mr. W. Smith) for introducing the phrases 'rights of men and laws of God;' and I do not wonder that he is somewhat provoked at these obnoxious expressions; for one cannot think of slavery without perceiving that it is an usurpation of the one and a violation of the other. The right hon. gentleman, the mover of this motion, tells us that no one can reconcile the promise we have given for the extinction of slavery with the promise which we have also given for a due consideration of the rights of the parties interested. We are reduced to the alternative, he tells us, of sacrificing the planter to the interests of the slave, or the slave to the interests of the planter. If we are in that predicament, and must decide for the one or the other, my judgment is unequivocally in favour of the slave. And it is a consideration of the 'rights of man, and the laws of God' which leads me to that unequivocal decision."

He concludes in these words: —

"I would give the negro all that I could give him with security; I would do every possible thing to mitigate and sweeten his lot; and to his children I would give unqualified emancipation. Having done this, I would settle with the planters. I am a friend to compensation, but it is compensation on the broadest scale. * * * Do you ask compensation for him who has wielded the whip? Then I ask compensation for him who has smarted under its lash! — Do you ask compensation for loss of property, contingent and future? Then I ask compensation for unnumbered wrongs, the very least of which is the incapacity of possessing any property whatever.

If compensation be demanded, we re-echo the demand. It is that which we most fervently desire; only let it be just compensation, dealt out for the many who have suffered, and not confined to the few who may suffer in one particular."

One of his friends writes to Mr. J. J. Gurney :—

"The whole House was carried along by his earnestness, cheered him vehemently, and listened attentively. He was much congratulated on the success of his reply."

Little more could be done towards advancing the Anti-slavery question during this session. Mr. Brougham, who had intended to bring it forward, was prevented from doing so by ill health: and Dr. Lushington's duties were too onerous to permit of his carrying on the struggle single-handed; but during the last year he and Mr. Brougham had been engaged in their arduous contest on behalf of the free people of colour in the West Indies, endeavouring to rescue them from their painful and humiliating position. Dr. Lushington wrote in November, 1827,—

"I send you sundry letters and documents from Wilmot Horton, and by his desire. We have had warm work since you left London, and it seems likely to continue; however I am in high spirits. We have Brougham in full energy, strength, and determination, and we have a case in all points impregnable. Would I had more leisure! for my appetite is whetted by all the follies and iniquities of the planters."

At length, in the session of 1828, Dr. Lushington's exertions in behalf of the free people of colour were crowned with complete success. An Order in Council was issued, by which they were at once placed on the same footing, in every respect, as their white fellow citizens: a measure fraught with momentous consequences to the welfare of the West Indies.

On the 20th of March, Mr. Buxton had an interview

with Mr. Huskisson. He offered to put Government into possession of all his documents and evidence respecting the slave trade at the Mauritius if they would go on with the inquiry, as he was unable to do so, and he strongly urged them to take it up. Mr. Huskisson replied that they would consider about it, and desired that documents relating to the cruel usage of the slaves should be sent to him. He also assured Mr. Buxton that the trade was now stopped, that the registry was enforced, and that some Orders in Council would be sent out and put into operation.

No other steps were at present taken by the Government; they had previously sent out a commission of inquiry, and further measures were deferred till its report should have been received.

Mr. Buxton writes in a paper dated Sunday, the 25th May, 1828:—

"I keep this as the anniversary of my illness, which began on Sunday, May 20th, 1827; and I must not let the day pass without returning my solemn and fervent thanks to thee, my God, for that most gracious visitation, coupled with solemn and fervent prayers that I may never lose the benefit which this visitation was sent to confer. I thank thee, O Lord, that thou wast pleased to administer that sharp antidote. None other perhaps would have been effectual. I was within the jaws of death, and was I fit to die? Was I prepared to encounter the presence of my Maker? How do my sins marshal themselves in order under such a question? Again I thank thee, O Lord, that thou didst deliver me, and I can use the words of the Psalmist (Psalm ciii. four first verses), with some emphasis and some application to myself. There is not a clause in these verses which is not my own. My disease was healed, my iniquity was pardoned, my life, natural and spiritual, had a Redeemer, and loving kindness and tender mercy was that which I, a sinner, received at the hands of God; and therefore my cry unto thee is that thou wouldst give me such a deep sense of

thy mercy, such a sense or rather vision of thy goodness, that I may love thee with all my heart, and all my mind, and all my strength: and therefore I pray that I may remember my latter end, the approaching day of judgment, and prepare to meet it."

CHAPTER XIII.

1828, 1829.

THE HOTTENTOTS.—DR. PHILIP.—VAN RIEBECH'S REGRETS.—MISERIES OF THE HOTTENTOTS.—DR. PHILIP'S RESEARCHES.—MR. BUXTON'S MOTION.—THE GOVERNMENT ACQUIESCES.—LETTER FROM DR. PHILIP.—THE ORDER IN COUNCIL SENT OUT.—LETTER TO MR. J. J. GURNEY.—THE HOTTENTOTS SET FREE.—ALARMS DIE AWAY.—HAPPY RESULT.—THE KAT RIVER SETTLEMENT.

ALTHOUGH unable to take much part in public affairs during this session, yet, at the instance of the Rev. Dr. Philip of the Cape of Good Hope, Mr. Buxton made an effort in behalf of the Hottentots, which was crowned with easy and complete success.

Eight years before, Dr. Philip had been sent out by the London Missionary Society, on a deputation appointed to inquire into the state of their missions in South Africa. In the course of these investigations he had become acquainted with the grievous state of degradation in which the Hottentots were held by the inhabitants of the colony, and especially by the Dutch boors. One hundred and seventy years before, they had been the undisturbed possessors of that fertile tract of country which is now comprehended under the name of the "Cape Colony." In 1652 the first Dutch settlement was formed, and the curse of Christian neighbours fell upon the hapless owners of the land.

The first germ of the treatment they met with may be seen in the following extracts from the journal of Van Riebech, the Dutch governor.

"December 13. 1652.

"To-day the Hottentots came with thousands of cattle and sheep close to our fort, so that their cattle nearly mixed with ours. We feel vexed to see so many fine head of cattle, and not to be able to buy to any considerable extent. If it had been indeed allowed, we had opportunity to-day to deprive them of 10,000 head, which, however, if we obtain orders to that effect, can be done at any time, and even more conveniently, because they will have greater confidence in us. With 150 men, 10,000 or 11,000 head of black cattle might be obtained without danger of losing one man; and many savages might be taken without resistance, in order to be sent as slaves to India, as they still always come to us unarmed."

A day or two later we find him "wondering at the ways of Providence, which permitted such noble animals to remain in the possession of heathens." It was not long before he thought it best to thwart the ways of Providence instead of wondering at them; and the system which he began was carried out by the Dutch, and afterwards by the English, until the Hottentots had sunk to the lowest depths of misery. Nothing can be more painful than the accounts given of them at the time of Dr. Philip's first visit to the Cape. They were not like the negro slaves, the legal property of certain individuals; they were at the mercy of all who chose to oppress them and compel their services: not even possessing that degree of protection which the hateful system of slave ownership affords. Their tribes were public property, and any one might seize as many of them as he pleased for his private use. Their rich lands and vast herds of cattle had long since become the spoiler's prey. At the caprice of the Dutch boors they were subjected to the heaviest labours, to every species of harassing annoyance, to every kind of revolting punishment. Beneath this grinding misery their numbers had dwindled, their persons had become dwarfed, and

their minds brutalised, till the very negro slaves looked down on them as lower and baser drudges, far below the level of mankind.

In 1822 Dr. Philip returned for a short time to England, and communicated this information to Mr. Wilberforce, Dr. Lushington, and Mr. Buxton, who agreed that the former should move in the House for a commission of inquiry to proceed to the Cape; as also to the Mauritius, and to Ceylon: this was accordingly done, and in 1824 we find Mr. Buxton moving for the reports received from these commissioners; which afforded some information of value. In 1826 Dr. Philip again came back to England, and after a time published his "Researches in South Africa," which excited much attention, and he urged Mr. Buxton to bring the case of the Hottentots before Parliament. Although feeling great interest in the subject, Mr. Buxton was too deeply engrossed by the Mauritius question to turn aside at that time. In 1828, however, he was able to make himself master of the subject, and gave notice of a motion for an address to the king on behalf of the natives of South Africa.

He writes, July, 1828,—

"I have not yet determined what I shall say about the Hottentots. I shall take as the foundation of my argument their legal freedom, prove that they are practically slaves, and demand that we act up to our engagement and make them free; but it is doubtful if I shall speak. Government will probably give way to my motion, on condition that I abstain from speaking. Terms not to be rejected I think."

To this compromise the Government agreed. Mr. Buxton brought forward his motion without a single comment; and Sir George Murray (Secretary for the Colonies) then rose, and briefly expressed the concur-

rence of the Government. The address was unanimously agreed to, and the Hottentots were free! Mr. Buxton walked up to Dr. Philip, after the motion had been carried, and said, "Ah, these men do not know the good they have done!"

In a hasty note to Mrs. Upcher, he thus announced the triumph:—

"July 17. 1828.

"I have only time to say, that we have recorded a resolution of the House of Commons, with regard to the Hottentots, which is their Magna Charta; and which will spread liberty, and, with liberty, a thousand other blessings, over that great and growing territory."

The Rev. Dr. Philip to T. F. Buxton, Esq.

"My dear Sir, "July 16. 1828.

"The more I reflect upon the decision of Parliament on Tuesday evening, the more I am struck with its importance. It is intimately connected with all the great questions now before the public, which have for their object, to ameliorate the condition of the coloured population in every region of the globe; it is one of the principal stones in the foundation of that temple which Mr. Wilberforce has been so long labouring to rear, for the protection of the oppressed; and it has given a strength and an elevation to the building, which will render the whole more secure, and its future progress more easy. I wish you could be present at our missionary stations when the glad tidings shall be announced; you would see many a sparkling eye, many a cheek furrowed with tears of joy, and hear your name associated with many a thanksgiving to God for this unexpected deliverance."

It was a singular coincidence that, only two days after this motion had passed in Parliament, Major General Bourke, the just and humane Governor of the Cape, promulgated an ordinance (well known afterwards as the Fiftieth Ordinance), by which the Hottentots were placed on the same footing as the other inhabitants of

the colony. As soon as Sir George Murray heard of this step, an Order in Council was issued (January 15. 1829), ratifying the ordinance, and, moreover, prohibiting any future alteration of it by any colonial authority. When Mr. Buxton, who had spent the autumn and winter at Northrepps, came back to London for the session of 1829, he found the business thus happily concluded.

He sent this intelligence to Mr. J. J. Gurney; but begins his letter by alluding to the excitement which prevailed on account of the Duke of Wellington's expressed intention to take into consideration the removal of the Catholic disabilities.

"February 9. 1829.

"We had a slave meeting at Brougham's yesterday; and S. Gurney would go with me, to prevent them from putting too much upon me. Brougham, Mackintosh, Denman, Spring Rice, Wm. Smith, Macaulay, were the party. They were all in the highest glee about the Catholics; Brougham particularly. They seemed exquisitely delighted with the vexation of the Tories, who are, and have reason to be, they say, bitterly affronted; and the great ones among them vow they will have an apology, in the shape of some good place, or they will never forgive the Duke for letting them go down to the House as strong Protestants, and insisting upon their returning that very day, stout Catholics! They say they do not mind changing their opinions, —that is a duty which they must sometimes pay to their chiefs, —but they think it hard to be obliged to turn right-about-face at the word of command, without a moment being given to change their convictions.

"The Duke is very peremptory. The story goes, that he said to Mr.——, who has a place under Government, 'We have settled the matter, and hope you like it.' Mr.—— said he would take time to consider it. 'Oh yes! you shall have plenty of time; I don't want your answer before four o'clock to-day. I shall thank you for it then; for if you don't like our measures, we must have your office and seat for somebody else.'

"To-morrow we are to have a fierce debate. The high church party are very furious, and talk of calling upon the country, and I expect we shall have a good deal of bitterness.

"As to slavery, we determined not to fix our plans for a week, in order to see the turn this Catholic business is likely to take, for the House will hear nothing else now, but we are to have a day fixed for Brougham's motion before Easter. He wanted me to begin on the Mauritius; but I said, 'No! if they are not in a temper to hear you, I am sure they will not hear me.'

"Spring Rice said that he had seen General Bourke, late governor of the Cape of Good Hope, who tells him that Government have sent out an Order in Council, giving entire emancipation to the Hottentots. If this proves true I shall be excessively delighted, and shall never say again that I am sorry I went into Parliament; not that I did much in the business, but I flatter myself I did a little. Do get M. to read Dr. Philip's book on South Africa. I think you would not repent if you did the same. I am very well, and in good spirits, though somewhat worried about the tiresome mines, which want attention."

His delight was well-founded. From the day that the Fiftieth Ordinance became law the Hottentots were raised to the level of their white oppressors; they were protected by the same laws, they could own property, they could demand wages in return for their labour, they could no longer be seized, "like stray cattle," if they left their village bounds; in short, they were become a free people; and since that day civilization and Christianity, with all their retinue of blessings, have flourished among them. For a while dismal forebodings and fierce complaints rang among the colonists at this sudden inroad upon their oppressive privileges; but after a few slight commotions both their anger and their fears died away: and the experience of eighteen years has abundantly approved the wisdom, as well as the justice, of this important measure.

To the N. E. of the colony lies the rich pasture land of the Kat River; from which, in 1827, the Caffres had been expelled, after a long guerilla warfare with the colonists. On this tract of country the colonial Government, at the suggestion of Captain (now Sir Andries) Stockenstrom, determined to form a Hottentot settlement, as a sort of outwork against the Caffres, and also to afford an opportunity for drawing forth the latent energies of the Hottentots themselves. The latter quickly poured into the settlement from all parts of the colony, but for a long time they had to struggle with every species of privation and danger. Captain Stockenstrom had no tools to give them; when they asked him what means they would have to cultivate the ground, he could only answer, "If you cannot do it with your fingers you had better not go there." However, they set to work, lending each other such tools as they possessed, and soon began water-courses to irrigate the land for the seed-corn allowed by Government.

When Dr. Philip returned from England to Africa he found them still in want of even the necessaries of life; but they had commenced the cultivation of the soil; and many of them, having been trained under missionaries while in the colony, were thirsting for education, though, as yet, no regular teachers were allowed by the Colonial Government to visit them. At one of the new hamlets, named after Mr. Wilberforce, a school had been established, which was attended by sixty or seventy children. The teacher was a young Hottentot, who could himself read but very imperfectly. To an observation of Dr. Philip he replied, that he could teach but little, but that as soon as a qualified master should come, he would resign his charge and take his seat among the children.

At another hamlet, named after Mr. Buxton *, a school had already been brought into excellent order, under the direction of a daughter of Andrew Stoffles, a converted Hottentot.

Further on, they observed a well-dressed female Hottentot standing on a stone, tinkling a small bell. They followed her unperceived, and soon found her in a hut with fifty children closely wedged in around her. She was the village school-mistress; her only apparatus being the separated leaves of a New Testament, one of which was held by each of the children, and they were quickly learning to spell the words. A few days after Dr. Philip's arrival, the Hottentots assembled to petition him to provide them with a teacher. "At an early hour," says he, "we sat down under the shade of some spreading trees, near the banks of the Kat River, and surrounded by some of the noblest scenery I ever saw. After prayer and singing a hymn several of the head men addressed the assembly, and then Andrew Stoffles delivered a speech which produced an effect I had never before seen equalled. The main topic of his address was the former oppression of the Hottentots, and he described what he had seen and felt, rapidly pointing out the parallel between their own position (former and present) with the bondage of the Children of Israel in Egypt, and their entrance into the promised land. The

* Sixteen years later, the Rev. James Read thus refers to the village of Buxton: —

"Kat River, May 29. 1843.

"Buxton is one of our largest locations; we have a good school there. The school-room, which is so large that it serves also for a chapel, has been built chiefly at the expense of Sir Fowell Buxton. The people are very proud of the name of their place: the situation is delightful; the soil very fertile, being watered by a small stream, which is tributary to the Kat River. It is furnished with forests of the finest timber." (Report of the London Missionary Society, 1844, p. 125.)

analogy was finely brought out; and, as he went on from point to point of the resemblance, it was wonderful to see the effect produced upon the feelings of his audience; they became at length convulsed with emotion: numbers, unable to support their feelings, hastened away to weep apart. When they were a little composed they assembled round us again, and closed the business of the meeting by an urgent and unanimous request that the Rev. J. Read might come among them as their missionary. The request was granted, and with the happiest effects."

The following extracts, from authentic documents, will show the remarkable success of this experiment. But it must be premised that the Hottentots who did not emigrate to the Kat River amounted at that time to about 25,000. They continued in the colony, working industriously, like any other labourers, for wages, and protected by the laws. A gentleman of great respectability, writing in 1832, says, "The number of crimes charged against the Hottentots in the colony, at the circuits, has of late greatly diminished, * * * a great improvement is clearly manifest in their moral condition."

The Kat River settlement originally contained about 5000 Hottentots. It has continued to flourish in the most satisfactory manner, and has proved a strong defence to the colony, in the late Caffre war.

So early as 1832, we find it stated that —

"The success of the Hottentots has been equal to their industry and good conduct. By patient labour, with manly moderation and Christian temperance, they have converted the desert into a fruitful field."*

* Letter in Anti-Slavery Record, vol. i. p. 124.

It is worthy of remark, that, although while in a state of servitude the Hottentots had been very much given to drinking, they acquired at the Kat River remarkable habits of temperance; and of their own accord petitioned, and successfully, against the establishment of brandy canteens.

They had already "two missionaries, whose chapels were regularly filled, and several schools crowded with orderly and intelligent children."*

In 1832, they paid taxes to the Government to the amount of 2300 rix dollars. In 1833, Colonel Bell (the Government Secretary of the colony) stated that,—

"As to that large proportion of the Hottentots who remained in the service of the colonists as free labourers, their character and condition are every day improving. Those settled at the Kat River, as small farmers, have made a very surprising progress. A large portion of them, from being an indolent, intemperate, and improvident class, have, since a field was opened for virtuous ambition, become industrious, sober, and prudent in their conduct."

In the same year Captain Stockenstrom (Chief Civil Commissioner of the Eastern Province) writes†,—

"The Hottentots at the Kat River have cultivated an extent of country which has surprised every body who has visited the location. * * * Instead of apathy or indifference about property, they have become (now that they have property to contend for) as covetous and litigious about land and water as any other set of colonists. They have displayed the utmost anxiety to have schools established among them. * * * They travel considerable distances to attend divine service regularly. Their spiritual guides speak with delight of the fruit of their labours. Nowhere have Temperance Societies succeeded half so well as among this people. They have repulsed all the attacks of the Caffres. They pay every tax like the rest of the colonists.

* Letter in Anti-Slavery Record, vol. i. p. 124.
† To T. Pringle, Esq.

They have rendered the Kat River by far the safest part of the frontier. * * * As far as the land is arable they have made a garden of it from one end to the other."

According to Colonel Wade*,

"They had, in 1833, completed 55 canals for irrigation, 44 of which measured 24 miles! Their works," said he, "give the best evidence that the Hottentots can be as industrious, and are as capable of contending with ordinary difficulties, as their fellow-men."

Dr. Philip had described the Hottentots in bondage, as —

"In a more degraded and imbruted state than they were in a state of nature; trampled upon by their masters; held as a perquisite of office by the Colonial Governor; regarded by the negro slaves as only fit to be their drudges; despised by the Caffres, and by all the natives in a state of freedom; and represented by travellers as scarcely possessing the human form, as the most filthy, stupid beings in the world; as scarcely to be considered belonging to the human race."

He thus describes them after their settlement at the Kat River: —

"The Kat River now presents a scene of industry, sobriety, and decency, not surpassed by the peasantry of any country in Europe. They are building themselves good houses; they are very decently clothed; their industry is admitted even by their enemies."

In 1839, Mr. Backhouse mentions his having visited the Hottentots, and found them "dressed like decent plain people of the labouring class in England. In the sixteen schools of the Kat River district, they had about 1200 scholars, and an attendance of about 1000."†

* Evidence before Aborigines Committee.

† Backhouse's Narrative of a Visit to South Africa, p. 186.

CHAPTER XIV.

1829.

CATHOLIC EMANCIPATION. — REFLECTIONS. — THE MAURITIUS SLAVE TRADE. — AGREEABLE NEWS. — THE MAURITIUS CASE REVIVED. — LETTER TO MR. TWISS. — THE GOVERNMENT ADMIT THE EXISTENCE OF THE SLAVE TRADE. — ITS COMPLETE EXTINCTION. — MR. GEORGE STEPHEN. — MR. JEREMIE.

DURING the session of 1829, Parliament was chiefly occupied by the discussions on the question of Catholic Emancipation. Mr. Buxton's constituents at Weymouth were opposed to the measure; and the knowledge of this opposition, combined with his own doubts, made him for a considerable time unwilling to vote at all on the question. With this neutrality, however, he could not long remain satisfied. After serious deliberation he became thoroughly convinced of the justice and expediency of the measure, and thenceforward gave it his support; a step which much offended many of his friends, and seriously endangered his seat for Weymouth.

To a Friend.

"House of Commons, March 5.

"Here I am waiting for the Catholic debate, and you will be sorry to hear,—no, you will not, you are too valiant,—that I am going to secure my non-election next Parliament by voting for the Roman Catholics to-night. I really must vote: the peace and safety of Ireland depend on our vote. I spent yesterday with Macaulay and Wilberforce very pleasantly. I am full of business, but not overworked; this is just what I like."

After expressing a hope that he might not be un-

spiritualised by the cares and engagements of the world, he writes, Feb. 15th: —

"Substance of private prayer:—To return thanks that I can trust that my sins, many and grievous, have been forgiven, and that there is to me an offer of reconciliation; that prayer and the Scriptures are become more sweet to me; that I have a wife to my heart's content, a daughter who has the ability to be my companion and friend, that Edward and Harry are doing so well, and that the three little ones are a source of pleasure, not anxiety; that peace reigns among us; that I have so many and such dear friends; that I more clearly see, by study of the Scriptures, particularly the Psalms, that prayer is commanded, and that it is sure to be answered.

* * * * * *

"Last Sunday, I prayed that the week might bring relief from anxiety: it has come. Again I repeat my prayer. Satisfy us early with thy mercy, that we may rejoice and be glad all our days. Give thy help to-morrow in the work of that day,—thy help at the missionary meeting, that wisdom may be granted us in the correction of the errors and evils which may have crept into that glorious cause. Every needful help at every hour, and thy spirit with us; the spirit of prayer, fervent and acceptable; the spirit of patience and submission; the spirit of hope and confidence."

On the 29th of March, he gives a kind of summary of the preceding twelve months.

"Wednesday next is my birthday; I shall then be forty-three. That day I have engaged to spend with my admirable friend Wilberforce, who, having devoted his life to the purpose of conferring upon Africa the greatest blessing which man can bestow on man, is now passing the remnant of his days in retirement and repose. I wish, according to my usual practice, to review the proceedings of the past year. In public life I have taken but little part; Brougham's illness prevented, during last session, the proposed discussion on slavery; and during this session nothing has been thought of but the Catholic question. I assisted, however, in one great work, which, although it passed almost in silence, is likely to be attended with the most

important and happy consequences,—the liberation of the Hottentots.

"It is recorded of Paul that he thanked God and took courage; and with thankfulness to God that I was entrusted with this easy and honourable task, I hope to gather from it confidence and encouragement in those other works of humanity in which I am engaged. Another work of a public nature which has engaged me, is the state of the Church Missionary Society. I attended in February a meeting of the Society, and felt it my duty to say, that I thought it desirable a close and sifting inquiry should be instituted into its circumstances; in that I am now engaged.

"Last autumn my mother ended a life which had been shaded by a variety of misfortunes: her death was peaceful, and I doubt not that, through the merits of her blessed Redeemer, she was admitted to everlasting happiness. * * * I last saw her at Weymouth, in August; her image is clear to my mind, and long will it be before I forget the sweetness and humility which then adorned her. Of her once high spirit, nothing remained which did not become a Christian. She was still clear and strong in judgment; still, as always, entirely devoid of every selfish feeling; but there was a meekness and subjection about her which evidently descended from above. * * * I saw her buried in a little burying ground at Bridport: and very thankful indeed was I, that, after the troubles and conflicts she had encountered, we could lay her there, in a sure and certain hope of a joyful resurrection."

After mentioning other events of the year, he continues:—

"Within the bounds of my own immediate family I have been peculiarly prosperous. * * * 'Bless the Lord, O my soul; and all that is within me, bless His holy name.'

"And peculiarly happy am I also in the next circle,—that of my chosen friends. I have often thought that there is no one so rich in friends as I; but this is a large topic, so I waive it.

"In my public capacity it has pleased God, in depriving me of strong health, to deprive me of the power of much exertion.

My public reputation has, I think, considerably fallen. If I could be sure that I have done as much as my reduced strength would admit, this would give me no concern; and, to speak the truth, it does give me no concern.

"In my outward affairs I have had, as I have said, many trials in some particulars; in others, I have been equally successful. But I do believe, I recognise both misfortune and success, as coming from the same Divine and fatherly hand."

After other prayers and thanksgivings, he thus concludes:—

"I pray also that I may evermore be helped o f thee in my public pursuits: that in the cause of the oppressed negro I may not be a negligent or a useless advocate. Be thy blessing there, O Lord!

"That particularly with regard to the oppressed negro at the Mauritius I may have thy help. 'For the oppression of the poor, for the sighing of the needy; now will I arise, saith the Lord.' O may this be verified, and that speedily!

"That thy help may attend me in my present labours on the missionary question.

"I do thank thee, O Lord, that I have not now, as heretofore, to address prayer to thee with regard to the Hottentot question, but praises and thanksgivings."

* * * * * *

"And now for those dear to me, for my friends, I pray that every blessing I have asked for myself may attend them. I feel especially prompted to pray for some of them; especially for poor dear Macaulay, who I know is in much sorrow. Let me plead, O Lord, his sacrifices in the slave question, his many trials, his unparalleled labours; the services he has rendered, and the reward he receives at the hand of man,—reproach, calumny, and insult. Be pleased, O Lord, thyself to reward him; smooth away every difficulty; grant him prosperity; and grant him to grow in grace: enrich him with the comfort of thy Holy Spirit; make him prosperous here, and happy hereafter. * * * For some other of my friends, I pray that their hearts may cleave to thee, that their affections may be set on things above, not on things on the earth; and that finding

mortification and disappointment here, they may seek comfort with thee, at whose right hand are pleasures for evermore.

"For all my relatives, and for all my friends, I pray that the blessing of God, through Jesus Christ, may rest upon them."

He had hoped this session to have again brought forward the Mauritius case.

To Zachary Macaulay, Esq.

"London, April, 1829.

"When I was last in town I had been for some time extremely unwell; and I then thought, as I believe you thought also, that it would not be prudent for me to undertake any heavy business this session. Since that time I have been much better; and, reflecting much upon the Mauritius horrors, I cannot feel comfortable to let those questions rest. I really wish to ask your advice; I well know the deep interest which you take in my welfare, as well as in that of our cause; and now tell me, whether in your opinion I ought to hazard the 'inevitable death' with which Dr. Farre last year threatened me, or to desert a cause which now more than ever wants the aid of all its friends. I confess the bias of my mind is strongly in favour of bringing forward the Mauritius cruelty case; and if you agree with me, so I believe it must be. If you fix a meeting of our friends at Brougham's, I shall make a point of being there.

* * * * * *

"With respect to our proceedings in Parliament, I am still inclined to believe that the best thing which could be done would be for Brougham to make his motion.

"It is clear that a very powerful statement is wanting in order to renew the interest of the public; and having him, and Mackintosh, and our other friends ready for a great effort upon the admission of slave evidence, we are so safe, and so certain of making a great impression, that I cannot bring myself to think any thing else is so good."

The attention of Parliament was so entirely engrossed by the Catholic question, that his intention respecting

the Mauritius could not be carried into effect, nor was his health equal to any exertion in public. In private, he continually pressed the Government to further measures; one of which is alluded to in the following memorandum, which also refers to the success of Mr. Brougham's endeavours to procure the recognition of negro evidence in the colonies:—

"May 17. 1829.

"1. On Tuesday last, Sir George Murray told me that Government would next session introduce a bill for admitting negro evidence; and likewise a bill for improving courts of justice. 2. That they would grant a commission for investigating the slave trade at the Mauritius, and the condition of the slaves. 3. Twiss told me on Thursday that Government had resolved to send out orders to emancipate the Indians at Honduras, in whose cause, at the instigation of Colonel Arthur, we moved about three years ago.* 4. Dr. Philip, on Thursday, told me that the Order in Council with respect to the Hottentots was all that he wished. So far, then, God has been pleased to answer our prayers. My text and my comfort to-day has been, 'Delight thyself in the Lord, and he shall give thee the desires of thine heart. Commit thy way unto the Lord, trust also in him, and he shall bring it to pass.'"

Towards the close of the session, Sir Robert Farquhar recurred to the statement formerly made, that slave-trading had existed in the Mauritius during his government, and required that the charge should be investigated, or retracted. Mr. Buxton explained the reason why it had been dropped, and read the opinion of his physician, that he could not attend to public business in Parliament without danger to his life. But he pledged

* Mr. Wilberforce had requested Mr. Buxton to undertake this matter, in a letter dated February 18. 1825, adding, "I know I need not apologise to you for the trouble I impose on you, in the residuary legatee capacity. You are likely to have a very unprofitable inheritance, if it be estimated according to the ordinary principles of valuing articles. But their *sterling value* will be recognised by and by."

himself, if alive in the next session, to accept the challenge of the honourable Baronet.* However, in the course of the summer, the commissioners returned, and their report rendered any further exertion unnecessary. In spite of the great difficulties by which they had been surrounded (for the inhabitants had banded themselves together in a sort of conspiracy, to prevent any evidence from being laid before them), they had established the fact of the Mauritius slave trade, and to a great degree ascertained its extent; and they clearly proved that this trade had continued in full vigour, except during the administration of General Hall.

On August 23. 1829, Mr. Spring Rice, whose co-operation in this question had been in the highest degree valuable, writes to Mr. Buxton:—

"My principal object in writing respects the Mauritius case. In the first place, let me congratulate you on the complete vindication of yourself contained in the Report. But what course is next year to be taken? If a committee, you may depend on my best help, night and day, if necessary; but only on the condition of being authorised by Mrs. Buxton to watch you as attentively as the Inquiry, and to send you packing, if I see the matter press on your health or spirits. Pray tell Mrs. Buxton to furnish me with full powers over you, or otherwise I shall never go down. Also let me know what are your plans, and what I ought to fag at during the recess. All this assumes a committee to be the fitting course; but I have my doubts, now that the case is launched, whether a commission† in the islands is not a better mode of procedure. Turn this in your mind, and consult Lushington and Brougham; I think Murray is deserving of every confidence."

The following letter was Mr. Buxton's reply to a suggestion from Mr. Horace Twiss (Under-Secretary for the

* See Mirror of Parliament, June 3. 1829.

† i. e. an *executive* commission.

the Mauri
his healt
he cor
measu
mem
Bro
ne

LETTER TO MR. TWISS

consented that he should leave the matter in the hands of Government.

"Northrepps Hall, Cromer, October 21. 1829.

"My dear Twiss,

"Upon the most deliberate consideration I am afraid it is impossible for me to adopt your suggestion. I originally stated that the slave trade prevailed during Sir Robert Farquhar's government. Ill health prevented me from bringing forward, in the session of 1827, the proofs I possessed. In 1828, I took no steps, except that I offered to Mr. Huskisson to put the Government in possession of my case, as I was unable to go on with it. He declined my offer, but told me that it was Sir R. Farquhar's intention to require me either to retract my statements, or to proceed with the investigation. My reply was that I would retract nothing, and that if I were thus called on, I would, at any personal inconvenience, move for a committee.

"I heard no more of the question in 1828. At the latter end of last session, Sir Robert thought proper to make precisely the same demand as that of which Mr. Huskisson had warned me. I could do no less than accept the challenge, and declare that I would bring forward the question in the next session. If I were now to decline doing so, Sir R. Farquhar would stand in the best possible situation; charges were made against him —he had in Parliament defied his accuser to produce the proof —that accuser had pledged himself to do so, and had not performed his pledge: in short he would obtain a triumph, and that at my expense.

"Now, considering that the commissioners have proved beyond a doubt that slave trading *did* exist during his government, and considering that I have irresistible proof of all I have asserted, and of much more than I ever did state, this would not be to me a very eligible termination of the controversy.

"I have entered into this long explanation, in order to satisfy you that I am placed in a situation by Sir R. Farquhar's challenge, which leaves me no alternative but to proceed.

"I confess to you that, as far as he is concerned, I do so with the greatest reluctance. I have no enmity against him; and I should be very glad to be spared the task of being his accuser. Of this the best proof I can give is, that I should be ready, at this moment, to abandon the inquiry, with a full sense that I

expose myself to severe reflections, provided I could do so without sacrificing the interests of others. The slave trade did prevail; that is not disputed: every negro thus illegally brought into the colony, is by law free. Consequently, before I shall be justified in abandoning the inquiry, I ought to know that Government will take efficient measures for restoring freedom to these persons. Secondly, I can prove that the slaves at the Mauritius have been treated with unparalleled cruelty. I cannot abandon their case till I have security that Government will take decided measures for improving their condition. Thirdly, my motive for taking up the question, was a desire to suppress the slave trade. Before I can quit the subject, it must be proved to me that the slave trade is extinct, and that it cannot, in all human probability, be revived.

"Surely there is nothing in these requests to which the Government can make any objection. They must be as anxious as I am that no persons shall be held in illegal bondage in a British Colony,—that extreme cruelty should be prevented,—and that the slave trade should be suppressed. I say again, if these public objects can be accomplished, I shall take leave of the question, caring little whether my contest with Sir Robert Farquhar ends with credit to me or without it."

To Mrs. Buxton.

"February 5. 1830.

"I have had another interview with Sir George Murray this morning; and I am heartily grieved and heartily angry that he is not prepared to act as I wish about the Mauritius. It is not, however, settled; he is to give me a final answer in a few days. Is not this horrible? I am, however, well, and in good spirits, believing that, though there be the arm of flesh on one side, there is a stronger arm on the other."

Mr. Buxton was, however, spared any lengthened exertions on this subject. The unexpected death of Sir Robert Farquhar put an end to that part of the Mauritian controversy that related to him, and in the spring of 1830, the Government, convinced by the report of the commission, declared their willingness to take up the main question with vigour.

CHAPTER III.

1807—1812.

ENTERS TRUMAN'S BREWERY.—OCCUPATIONS IN LONDON.—LETTER FROM MR. TWISS.—CORRESPONDENCE.—DEATH OF EDWARD BUXTON.—EXERTIONS IN THE BREWERY.

THE first few months of Mr. Buxton's married life were passed at a small cottage close to his grandmother's seat at Bellfield, and in the neighbourhood of his mother, who had contracted a second marriage with Mr. Edmund Henning, and had left Essex to reside at Weymouth.

His expectations of wealth had been disappointed, and he found that his fortunes must depend upon his own exertions. After deliberate consideration, he relinquished the idea of following the profession of the law, and entered into negotiations in different quarters, with a view to establishing himself in business. For a while these were unsuccessful, and during this time he suffered severely from the pain of present inaction, and the obscurity that rested on the future. In after life when referring to this period, he said, "I longed for any employment that would produce me a hundred a year, if I had to work twelve hours a day for it." Nearly a year passed away before his anxieties were brought to a conclusion. The winter was spent at Earlham, where his first child was born. Soon afterwards, in a letter to his wife from London, he says, "I slept at Brick Lane; my uncles Sampson and Osgood Hanbury were there, and revived my old feelings of good nephewship, they treated me so kindly. This morning I met Mr. Randall and your father. I think that I shall become a Blackwell Hall factor.

This intention was prevented by an unexpected turn in his fortunes, resulting from his friendly interview with his uncles. Within a few days Mr. Sampson Hanbury, of Truman's Brewery in Spitalfields, offered him a situation in that establishment, with a prospect of becoming a partner after three years' probation. He joyfully acceded to the proposal, and entered with great ardour upon his new sphere of action. He writes, July, 1808, to his mother, "I was up this morning at four, and do not expect to finish my day's work before twelve to-night—my excuse for silence. I have not neglected your business." At the close of the year he succeeded Mr. Hanbury in the occupation of a house connected with the brewery, in which he continued to reside for several years.

During these years his correspondence was not extensive. Among the few letters which have been preserved is the following, addressed to his wife, who had accompanied one of her brothers to the Isle of Wight. Mr. Buxton had arranged to join them there; but on arriving at Southampton, he found that all communication with the island was interdicted on account of the secret expedition then about to sail from Cowes, as it afterwards proved, to Walcheren.

"Southampton, June 15. 1809.

"Now that I have finished my coffee, I think I cannot employ my time more profitably or more pleasantly than in sending a few lines to you. I am afraid the embargo has been a great trouble to you. It was so to me when I first arrived, as the idea of spending some time with your party was particularly pleasant: however, either by the aid of 'divine philosophy,' or, from finding that the misfortune was irremediable, in a short time I was reconciled to my fate, and began to consider how best to enjoy what was within my reach. As I could not have the living companions that I most wished for, I went to a book-

seller's shop to endeavour to find some agreeable dead ones, and having made choice of 'Tristram Shandy' and a 'Patriot King,' I proceeded in their honourable company to the water side, took a boat, and went off to Netley Abbey. I thoroughly enjoyed this excursion. First I went all over the interior, and then walked leisurely round it at some distance, stopping and reading at every scene that I particularly liked. Then I went up into the wood, to a spot which seems to have been formed for a dining room. While the boatman was at dinner, I went over into the next field to a higher ground. I hope this did not escape you. The four ivy-covered broken towers just below, a party dining on the grass-plat, the intermediate distance of trees, and the sea behind, made it, I think, the finest view I ever saw. I only hope you have sketched it; and next to it, I should wish for a drawing of the nearest window from the inside — I mean the one that is tolerably perfect, with a great deal of ivy over the middle pillar. I had a pleasant row home, and have since been thinking about your party with the greatest pleasure; and, amongst other thoughts connected with you, it has forcibly struck me how beneficial it is sometimes to be amongst strangers, it gives such a taste and a relish for the society of those one loves."

To Mrs. Henning.

"My dear Mother, "Dec. 3. 1809.

"I am very much obliged to you for your letter, which furnished me with several useful hints, though not upon the particular subject on which I wanted information.

"As to the general propriety and duty of introducing Christianity into India, there cannot be, I imagine, a question; but is this the proper season? is not our empire in India too unstable to authorize such an experiment? In short I wished to determine its political propriety, to examine it with the eye of a statesman, not of a Christian, and to inquire, not what Fenelon, but what Machiavel, would have said of it. The result which I have come to is, that it would be *highly expedient*, and perhaps the only measure which could reinstate our declining power in the East.

"Your letter shows powers of which I may make eminent use, but observe, I must qualify this praise by saying that it

wanted method throughout the whole, and greater pains bestowed upon the parts.

"The Poor Laws is the next question I shall consider, and I expect great assistance from you. The only restrictions that I would suggest are a parsimoniousness of Scripture quotations, and a care against negligence in the dress of the parts, for, after all, appearance and style are more than matter; a diamond is but a dirty pebble till it is polished. Virgil and his translator Trap only differed as to dress. The images, the incidents, the characters are the same in both, yet the one is the best poem in the Latin language, and the other perhaps the worst in the English."

To Mrs. Buxton.

"July 14. 1811.

"I hope to take a long walk with——, whose company is a great treat to me. I agree with you that he is a striking instance of the superiority of a domestic religious education. To be sure, to please my fancy, I should like a more *robustious* son; but I should be most happy to insure to my boy ——'s principle, and I would willingly resign all those sterner and more manly qualities which from inclination I am apt to wish."

Although, during his term of probation at the brewery, he was closely occupied in making himself master of his new vocation, he yet found time for the study of English literature, and especially of political economy. "My maxims are," he writes, "never to begin a book without finishing it; never to consider it finished till I know it; and to study with a whole mind." He admitted, in after-life, that even at this early period he had indulged a distant idea of entering Parliament; and in consequence of this he continued to practise the art of public speaking in a debating club of which he was a member.

"I must tell you," he writes to Mr. North, December 1810, "of a signal reformation which has taken place. I have become again a hard reader, and of sterling books. In spite of your marriage cause, I hold myself your equal in Blackstone and in Montesquieu, and your superior in Bacon, parts of whom I have

read with Mallettian avidity. I have not been much at 'The Academics,' but it goes on famously; your memory is held in the highest estimation — even our oracle Twiss speaks well of you. Grant and Bowdler are, I fear, gone from us."

His former schoolfellow, Mr. Horace Twiss, thus describes meeting him at this time: —

"We had been at school together at the celebrated Dr. Burney's, of Greenwich, and were very intimate.

"Buxton was then, as in after-life, extraordinarily tall, and was called by his playfellows 'Elephant Buxton.' He was at that time, as afterwards, like the animal he was called from, of a kind and gentle nature; but he did not then exhibit any symptoms of the elephantine talent he afterwards evinced.

"I myself very often did his Latin lessons for him; and, as he was somewhat older and much bigger than I was, I found him, in many respects, a valuable ally. When I was about twenty, I became a member of 'The Academics,' a society in London (like the 'Historical' in Dublin, and the 'Speculative' in Edinburgh), where the topics of the day were debated. There I heard, on my first or second evening of attendance, a speech of great ability from a man of great stature; and I should have been assured it was my old schoolfellow I saw before me, but that I could not suppose it possible so dull a boy could have become so clever a man. He it was, however; and I renewed my friendly intercourse with him, both at the society and in private.

"Our *chums* were poor North, afterwards distinguished in Parliament and at the Irish bar, who died at between forty and fifty; and Henry, the younger son of the great Grattan. We afterwards sat altogether in the House of Commons, with some others of our fellow-academics, the two Grants and Spring Rice. Horner had been an academic, but he was before our time. Of late years, Buxton was chiefly resident in Norfolk, but our mutual goodwill continued to the last."

From childhood the duty of active benevolence had been impressed on him by his mother, who used to set before him the idea of taking up some great cause by

which he might promote the happiness of man. On beginning to live in London he at once sought opportunities of usefulness, and in this pursuit he received great assistance from an acquaintance, which ripened into friendship, with the Quaker philosopher and philanthropist, William Allen. This good man had long been engaged upon objects of enlightened benevolence, and by him Mr. Buxton was from time to time initiated into some of those questions to which his after-life was devoted.

One of the most important of these had already dawned upon him. He writes to Mrs. Buxton, Dec. 1808:—

"I have one reason for wishing to remain in town, which is, that I am going to become a member of a small society, now instituting, for the purpose of calling the public mind to the bad effects and inefficiency of capital punishments."

And at a subsequent period he says—

"From the time of my connexion with the Brewery in 1808 to 1816, I took a part in all the charitable objects of that distressed district, more especially those connected with education, the Bible Society, and the deep sufferings of the weavers."

All these labours he shared with his brother-in-law, Mr. Samuel Hoare, of Hampstead, between whom and himself there existed then, and through life, a friendship and close fellowship, far beyond what usually results from such a connexion. With them was also linked his own brother Charles, who was resident in London, and was the favourite companion of both.

Although Mr. Buxton was a member of the Established Church, circumstances had cherished in him a strong attachment to the Society of Friends, and to their silent mode of worship. He frequently spent the Sunday under the roof of Mr. and Mrs. Fry, at Plashet, in Essex; and even when at home, from the time of his marriage up to

the year 1811, he generally attended a Friends' Meeting. In a letter written on Sunday, Oct. 22nd, 1809, he mentions that he had been reading the fifth chapter of St. Matthew, "as a subject for reflection at Meeting," and adds,—

"I think I almost always have a good meeting when I read before it, without any intermediate occupation of mind. It was a great pleasure to me to be able to engage myself so thoroughly when there, as I had begun to think that I was rather going back in that respect. The verse that principally led me on to a train of thought was that 'Except your righteousness exceed the righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven.' This text is always very striking to me. It is so serious a thing to be only on a par with the generality of those you see around you. This evening I have been thinking what I can do for the poor this winter. I feel that I have as yet done far short of what I ought and what I wish to do."

To Mrs. Buxton.

"Sept. 28. 1810.

"I have passed a very quiet and industrious week, up early, breakfast at eight o'clock, dinner near six, and the evenings to myself, which have been well employed over my favourite Blackstone. I read him till near ten last night, and then Jeremy Taylor till past eleven, and could hardly give him up, he was so very entertaining a companion. * * * This morning I went to Gracechurch Street meeting. I was rather late, which made me feel hurried, and prevented my having sufficient time to myself before meeting; however, I had made a little use of my friend Jeremy at breakfast, and this and last night's readings gave me occupation for my thoughts. I saw William Allen, who wants me to call upon him to-morrow, as he says he has found a place for the boys' school as suitable as if we were to build one. This, I know, will please you, but will alarm you also, lest we should forget the girls.

"And now you will expect to hear something about my return. I must tell you that you cannot be in a greater hurry for me to come to Earlham than I am to get there; for I do not

think I have lately enjoyed anything so much as the time I spent there, and I hold it to be quite a treasure and a blessing to have such brothers and sisters; I hope and believe, too, that it may be as useful as it is agreeable. Still I do not feel altogether confident that the stimulus which they have given me will be of any duration; for it is not inducements to do our duty that we want—these we have already in abundance. They are, indeed, so many and so various, that if we were only as prudent and as rational with regard to our future, as we are to our present, none would utterly want religion but those who utterly wanted sense."

It has been mentioned that Mr. Buxton was the eldest of three sons. Edward North, the third brother, a wayward lad, had been sent to sea as a midshipman in an East Indiaman, commanded by his relative Captain Dumbleton; but in his first voyage he left his ship and entered the king's service. From that time his family had received no tidings of him, and by degrees they became impressed with the painful conviction that he had died at sea. The suspense of five years was at last brought to an end by the arrival of a letter to Mr. Buxton from one of his brother shipmates, announcing that he had arrived, in a dying state, at Gosport, and was earnestly desirous to see some of his relations. He had been attacked by dysentery while on board ship at Bombay; and, feeling that his days were numbered, he became intensely anxious to reach home once more. He hastened to England in the first ship by which he could obtain a passage; and, on his arrival at Gosport, was carried to Haslar Hospital, whence he despatched a letter to his mother. This letter was unfortunately delayed, in consequence of its having been directed to the house at Earl's Colne, which had been parted with some years before, and the unhappy youth—he was only nineteen—in the morbid state of his feelings, became so strongly

impressed by a sense of his neglect in never having communicated with his friends, that he felt persuaded they would now refuse to acknowledge him. A second letter, in which he besought that some one of the family would consent to visit him on his death-bed, reached Mr. Buxton; and in two hours he and his brother Charles were on the road to Gosport, which they reached on the following morning. With mingled emotions of hope and fear they set out for the hospital. Having been directed to a large ward full of the sick and dying, they walked through the room without being able to discover the object of their search; till at length they were struck by the earnestness with which an emaciated youth upon one of the sick-beds was gazing at them. On their approaching his bedside, although he could scarcely articulate a word, his face was lit up with an expression of delight that sufficiently showed that he recognised them: but it was not for some moments that they could trace in his haggard features the lineaments of their long-lost brother.

A few days afterwards Mr. Buxton writes—

"Gosport, August 10. 1811.

"It is pleasant to be with Edward, he seems so happy in the idea of having his friends about him. This morning I thought him strong enough to hear part of a chapter in St. Luke, on prayer, and the 20th Psalm. Charles then went away, and I mentioned to him how applicable some of the passages were to his state; he said he felt them so, and that he had been very unfortunate in having been on board ship where religion is so neglected; that he had procured a Bible, and one of his friends had sometimes read to him, but not so often as he wished. That he had hoped and prayed that he might reach England, more that he might confess his sins to me than for any other reason; that, supposing at length that there was next to no chance of this, he had dictated a letter to me upon the subject, which is now in his box. When I told him that, as his illness had brought him into such a frame of mind, it was impossible

for me to regret it, let the event be what it would, he said he considered it as a mercy now, but that nobody could tell what his sufferings had been. I then entered into a kind of short history of what I considered to be inculcated in the Testament, 'that Christ came to call sinners to repentance.' He felt consolation from this; but again said that he had been indeed a sinner. I then told him that I hoped he did not ever omit to pray for assistance, and I added that Charles and I had joined in prayer for him last night. He seemed so much affected by this that I did not think it right to press the conversation farther. Does not all this furnish a striking proof how our sorrows may be converted into joys? I can look upon his illness in no other light than as a most merciful dispensation. It is most affectingly delightful to see his lowliness of mind, and his gratitude to all of us. I cannot help thinking that his mind is more changed than his body."

The letter above referred to, which was found in Edward Buxton's sea chest, was as follows:—

"My dearest Brother, "H.M.S. 'Chiffonne.'

"As this is the last letter you will ever receive from me, as I am now on my death-bed, I write to you to comfort as much as you can my dearest mother and my dearest brother and sisters. As I have been sick and in misery a very long while, it will be easing me taking me from this troublesome world. I was on my passage to Europe, as only a cold climate could have cured me; but God, whose will be done, has ordained that I should not see England, though I should have died infinitely happier had I seen my dearest mother, Anna, and you, to have got your forgiveness for the irregularities I have carried on; yet I feel you forgive me; and though I have been a very great sinner for the small number of years I have lived, I die with the hope of being saved, by what I had been led to believe, and now wish I had much more followed, *through Jesus Christ.*

"Don't let the news of my death cast any of you down, as we all know it is a thing we must all come to; and as you are the eldest and support of the family, comfort the rest as much as you can, not forgetting to remember me to your dear wife. I have often thought of her kindness to me at Norwich before

your marriage. And don't forget poor Abraham Plastow and Betty; tell them I thought of them in my last.

"I can't say any more. The bearer of this, Mr. Yeates, is a truly good-hearted young man, and has been extremely kind to me while I have been sick, and while I was in the Bombay hospital. He will give you my pay and prize certificate, which you can get paid for at Somerset House; and any other information concerning me you want, as I am too weak to write more. Adieu to you all.

"EDWARD N. BUXTON."

For about a fortnight after his brothers reached him the young midshipman survived. He had the comfort, so earnestly desired, of being nursed by his mother and of seeing once more his whole family.

"When he was told by Charles that I was come," writes his eldest sister, "he clasped his hands and gave thanks, but desired not to see me till he was composed; a tear or two that appeared he wiped off with his arm. He is so reduced and altered that I should not have had the least idea that it was he: neither in his hair, eyes, nor voice can you trace a resemblance. He looks the skeleton of a fine young man, handsomer than Edward was, as tall as his brothers, and of a dark complexion. He has had much satisfactory conversation with Fowell, lamenting that he had not followed his advice, and expressing that he had been enabled to pray much in coming over. Fowell read to him in the Bible yesterday. He was much affected, but comforted by it, saying he did not deserve to be so attended by his friends; and to-day he said to my mother that it was a sign to him that he was partly forgiven, that his prayers were heard to see his friends again, and obtain their forgiveness. His mind is remarkably clear; indeed Fowell seemed not to know before how strong it was, or what serious feelings he had."

Edward North Buxton died at Haslar Hospital on the 25th of August, 1811. His last words were addressed to his mother, saying that he was prepared for death; that the prospect of it did not appear now to him what it had done formerly; adding, with a remarkable ex-

pression of countenance, that "he hoped God would soon be so very kind as to take him."

His sister Sarah, in describing the solemn, and yet peaceful, meeting round the death-bed of the returned wanderer, thus mentions her eldest brother:—"Fowell, the head of our family, is a strong support; and when religious consolation was so much wanted, he seemed most ready to afford it. The power of his influence we deeply felt: it was by far the most striking feature in the past remarkable month."

In 1811 Mr. Buxton was admitted as a partner in the brewery; and during the ensuing seven years he was almost exclusively devoted to his business. Soon after his admission, his senior partners, struck by his energy and force of mind, placed in his hands the difficult and responsible task of remodelling their whole system of management. It would be superfluous to enter into the details of his proceedings, though, perhaps, he never displayed greater vigour and firmness than in carrying through this undertaking. For two or three years he was occupied from morning till night in prosecuting, step by step, his plans of reform: a single example may indicate with what spirit he grappled with the difficulties that beset him on all sides.

One of the principal clerks was an honest man, and a valuable servant; but he was wedded to the old system, and viewed with great antipathy the young partner's proposed innovations. At length, on one occasion, he went so far as to thwart Mr. Buxton's plans. The latter took no notice of this at the time, except desiring him to attend in the counting-house at 6 o'clock the next morning. Mr. Buxton met him there at the appointed hour; and, without any expostulation, or a single angry word, desired him to produce his books, as he meant for

the future to undertake the charge of them himself, in addition to his other duties. Amazed at this unexpected decision, the clerk yielded entirely; he promised complete submission for the future; he made his wife intercede for him; and Mr. Buxton, who valued his character and services, was induced to restore him to his place. They afterwards became very good friends, and the salutary effect of the changes introduced by Mr. Buxton was at length admitted by his leading opponent; nor, except in one instance, did he ever contend against them again. On that occasion Mr. Buxton merely sent him a message "that he had better meet him in the counting-house at 6 o'clock the next morning,"—and the book-keeper's opposition was heard of no more.

We may add, that, among other points wanting reform, he found that the men employed were in many instances wholly uneducated. To the remedy of this evil he took a more direct road than exhortation or advice. He called them together, and simply said to them, "This day six weeks I shall discharge every man who cannot read and write." He provided them a schoolmaster and means of learning, and on the appointed day held an examination. Such had been the earnestness to learn that not one man was dismissed.

He was also very careful to prevent any work from being done in the brewery on the Sunday, and the strict observance of it which he introduced has been thoroughly maintained up to the present time.

The success which crowned Mr. Buxton's exertions in business materially paved his way to public life. He was gradually relieved from the necessity of attending in person to the details of its management, although he continued throughout his life to take a part in the general superintendence of the concern.

CHAPTER IV.

1812—1816.

FIRST SPEECH IN PUBLIC. — THE REV. JOSIAH PRATT. — INCREASING REGARD TO RELIGION. — DANGEROUS ILLNESS. — ITS EFFECT ON HIS MIND. — REMOVES TO HAMPSTEAD. — DISAPPOINTMENTS AND ANXIETIES. — REFLECTIONS. — NARROW ESCAPE. — LETTER TO MR. J. J. GURNEY.

MR. BUXTON was, of course, closely bound to his London avocations; but almost every autumn he spent some weeks at Earlham, enjoying the recreation of shooting, in company with Mr. Samuel Hoare. It was during one of these visits that he first addressed a public meeting. His brother-in-law, Mr. Joseph John Gurney, in September, 1812, insisted that for once he should leave his sport, and give his aid in the second meeting of the Norwich Auxiliary Bible Society, at which Mr. Coke and other country gentlemen were present.

His speech on that occasion is thus alluded to by Mr. J. J. Gurney*: —

"There are many who can still remember the remarkable effect produced, in one of the earliest public meetings of the Norfolk and Norwich Auxiliary Bible Society, more than thirty years ago, by one of his speeches, distinguished for its acuteness and good sense, as well as for the Christian temper in which it was delivered. His commanding person†, his benevolent and highly intellectual expression of countenance, his full-toned voice, together with his manly yet playful eloquence, electrified the assembly, and many were those on that day who rejoiced that so noble and just a cause had obtained so strenuous and able an advocate."

* "Brief Memoir." Fletcher, 1845.

† Mr. Buxton was upwards of six feet four inches in height; but his powerful frame and broad chest rendered his height less apparent.

Some indications have been already given of the increasing power of religious principle in Mr. Buxton's mind; but he had not yet been fully brought under its influence, nor had he acquired clear views as to some of the fundamental truths of Christianity. In 1811 he mentions that during a visit to Lynn he had met his friends the Rev. Edward Edwards and the Rev. Robert Hankinson, who recommended him to attend the ministry of the Rev. Josiah Pratt, in Wheeler Street Chapel, Spitalfields; and to the preaching of that excellent clergyman he attributed, with the liveliest gratitude, his first real acquaintance with the doctrines of Christianity. He himself says — "It was much and of vast moment that I there learned from Mr. Pratt."—He wrote to Mr. Pratt thirty years afterwards, "Whatever I have done in my life for Africa, the seeds of it were sown in my heart in Wheeler Street Chapel." And when asked what had first interested him about Suttees, he replied "Mr. Pratt's preaching. Mr. Pratt used to mention them in his sermons, and ever after they rested on my heart."

With him, indeed, there was no sudden change, as in many men of well-known piety. Both nature and education had tended to prepare him for religion. His mind, ever disposed (in Bacon's words) to "prefer things of substance before things of show"—with a strong love for truth, and susceptible of deep feeling—afforded, perhaps, a fit soil for the reception of those truths, which at length struck deep root there. On the other hand, he regarded his tendency to become wholly absorbed in the work before him as a great bar to his progress in higher things. Thus he writes to one of his relatives at Earlham: —

"Hampstead, March 21. 1812.

"I had determined, before I received your last letter, to thank you, dear C——, myself, for much pleasure, and I think

a little profit (much less than it ought to have been), in observing the progress of your mind. It does indeed give me real joy to see you and others of your family striving in your race with such full purpose of heart; and the further I feel left behind—the more I feel engaged in other pursuits—so much the more I admire and love the excellence which I hardly endeavour to reach, and so much the more I perceive the infinite superiority of your objects over mine.

"When I contrast your pursuits with my pursuits, and your life with my life, I always feel the comparison a wholesome and a humiliating lesson, and it makes me see the ends for which I labour in their proper light; and my heart is ready to confess, that 'Thou hast chosen the good part, which shall not be taken from thee.' How is it, then, with this contrast constantly staring me in the face whenever I think seriously, that it has no effect, or next to none, on my practice? I see the excellence of the walk you have chosen, and the madness of dedicating myself to any thing but to the preparation of that journey which I must so shortly take. I know that if success shall crown all my projects, I shall gain that which will never satisfy me, 'that which is not bread.' I know the poverty of our most darling schemes—the meanness of our most delicious prospects—the transitoriness of our most durable possessions—when weighed against that fulness of joy and eternity of bliss which are the reward of those who seek them aright. All this I see with the utmost certainty—that two and two make four is not clearer; how is it, then, that with these speculative opinions, my practical ones are so entirely different? I am irritable about trifles, eager after pleasures, and anxious about business: various objects of this kind engross my attention at all times: they pursue me even to meeting and to church, and seem to grudge the few moments which are devoted to higher considerations, and strive to bring back to the temple of the Lord the sellers, and the buyers, and the money-changers. My reason tells me that these things are utterly indifferent; but my practice says that they only are worthy of thought, and attention. My practice says, 'Thou art increased with goods, and hast need of nothing:' but my reason teaches me, 'Thou art wretched and miserable, and poor, and, blind, and naked.'

* * * "I have in this letter divulged the train of thinking which is constantly recurring to my mind. * * * If I have said

too much in any part of it, I am sure I do not go beyond the truth in saying, that hardly any thing comes so near my heart as my love for my sweet sisters."

The period had now arrived from which may be dated that ascendancy of religion over his mind which gave shape and colouring to the whole of his after life.

In the commencement of the year 1813 he was visited by an illness which brought him to the brink of the grave. How momentous an era he felt this to have been, we may learn from the following paper, written after his recovery: —

"February 7. 1813.

"After so severe an illness as that with which I have lately been visited, it may be advantageous to record the most material circumstances attendant upon it. May my bodily weakness, and the suddenness with which it came, remind me of the uncertainty of life; and may the great and immediate mercy bestowed upon me spiritually, be a continual memorial that 'the Lord is full of compassion and long suffering,' and 'a very present help in trouble!'

"I was seized with a bilious fever in January. When I first felt myself unwell, I prayed that I might have a dangerous illness, provided that illness might bring me nearer to my God. I gradually grew worse; and when the disorder had assumed an appearance very alarming to those about me, I spent nearly an hour in most fervent prayer. I have been, for some years, perplexed with doubts; I do not know if they did not arise more from the fear of doubting than from any other cause. The object of my prayer was that this perplexity might be removed; and the next day, when I set about examining my mind, I found that it was entirely removed, and that it was replaced by a degree of certain conviction, totally different from any thing I had before experienced. It would be difficult to express the satisfaction and joy which I derived from this alteration. 'Now know I that my Redeemer liveth' was the sentiment uppermost in my mind, and in the merits of that Redeemer I felt a confidence that made me look on the prospect of death with perfect indifference. No one action of my life presented itself with any

sort of consolation. I knew that by myself I stood justly condemned; but I felt released from the penalties of sin by the blood of our sacrifice. In *Him* was all my trust.

"My dear wife gave me great pleasure by repeating this text—'This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners.' Once or twice only I felt some doubt whether I did not deceive myself arguing in this manner: —'How is it that I, who have passed so unguarded a life, and who have to lament so many sins, and especially so much carelessness in religion—how is it that I feel at once satisfied and secure in the acceptance of my Saviour? But I soon was led to better thoughts. Canst thou pretend to limit the mercies of the Most High? 'His thoughts are not as our thoughts, nor his ways as our ways.' He giveth to the labourer of an hour as much as to him who has borne the heat of the day. These were my reflections, and they made me easy."

When the medical gentleman who attended him observed that he must be in low spirits, "Very far from it," he replied: "I feel a joyfulness at heart which would enable me to go through any pain." "From faith in Christ?" he was asked. "Yes, from faith in Christ," was his reply; and, mentioning the clear view he now had of Christ being his Redeemer, he said, "It is an inexpressible favour beyond my deserts. What have I done all my life long? Nothing, nothing, that did God service, and for *me* to have such mercy shown! My hope," he added, "is to be received as one of Christ's flock, to enter heaven as a little child." A day or two afterwards he said, "I shall never again pass negligently over that passage in the Prayer Book, 'We bless thee . . . for thine inestimable love in the redemption of the world by our Lord Jesus Christ;'" and he broke forth into thanksgiving for the mercy, "the unbounded, the unmerited love," displayed towards him, in having the Christian doctrine brought home to his heart. When Mr. S. Hoare entered the room where he lay, Mr. Buxton

fixed his eyes upon him, and emphatically said, "Sam! I only wish you were as ill as I am!" When he recovered, he explained that he so greatly felt the effect upon his own mind, that he could not but wish his companion to share in the advantage. Again and again he declared how glad and thankful he was for his illness, and, at the same time, how anxious he felt lest the impression it had made upon him should become effaced.

After his recovery he thus writes to Earlham: —

"Perhaps you might think that your letters were not sufficiently valued by me if they remained unnoticed; they were both truly welcome, especially where they described your feelings at the prospect of the termination (I earnestly hope only the earthly termination) of our long and faithful union. My wife tells me that she said in her letter that I mentioned you all in my illness. This was but a languid description of the extent and force of love I felt towards you, and of gratitude to you, to whom I owe so great a portion of all that has been pleasant to me in my past life, and perhaps much of that which was consolatory to me at that awful but happy period. C—— calls it a chastisement, but I never felt it as such. I looked upon it when I was at the worst (and have not yet ceased to do so) as a gift and a blessing, and the choicest of my possessions. When I was too weak to move or speak, my mind and heart were at full work on these meditations, and my only lamentation was that I could not feel sufficiently glad or grateful for the mercy, as unbounded as unmerited, which I experienced. This mercy was, to know the sins of my past life, that the best actions of it were but dust and ashes, and good for nothing; that, by the righteous doom of the law, I stood convicted and condemned; but that full and sufficient satisfaction had already been made by Him who came to save sinners; and such was the ease and confidence with which this conviction inspired me, that death was not attended with a terror."

Fifteen years afterwards* he thus refers to the impressions made upon his mind during this illness. "It

* Cromer, 1828.

was then," he says, "that some clouds in my mind were dispersed; and from that day to this, whatever reason I may have had to distrust my own salvation, I have never been harassed by a doubt respecting our revealed religion." As his health and strength returned, he engaged with increased earnestness in supporting various benevolent societies, especially the Bible Society; and his common-place books during the years 1813—1816 are chiefly filled with memoranda on this subject. He came prominently forward in the controversy between the supporters of the Bible Society and those who united with Dr. Marsh* in opposing it.

These occupations filled up the short intervals of leisure afforded by his close attention to business; and while he continued to reside at the brewery few events occurred to vary his life. Some glimpses into the state of his mind are given in the following letters:—

"Spitalfields, Dec. 25. 1813.

"* * * I have often observed the advantage of having some fixed settling time in pecuniary affairs. It gives an opportunity of ascertaining the balance of losses and gains, and of seeing where we have succeeded and where failed, and what errors or neglects have caused the failure.

"Now, I thought, why not balance the mind in the same way—observe our progress, and trace to their source our mistakes and oversights? And what better time for this than Christmas-day followed by Sunday? And what better employment of those days? So it was fixed; and consequently I refused invitation after invitation—to Upton, Doughty Street, Plashet, Hampstead, Coggeshall, and Clifton. And now for a history of my day. After breakfast I read, *attentively*, the 1st of St. Peter, with some degree of that spirit with which I always wish to study the Scriptures. To me, at least, the Scriptures are nothing without prayer; and it is sometimes surprising to me what beauties they unfold, how much even of worldly wisdom

* Afterwards Bishop of Peterborough.

they contain, and how they are stamped with the clear impression of truth, when read under any portion of this influence; and without it how unmoving they appear.

"I also read Cooper's first Practical Sermon, the text—'What is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?' This is a subject which, of all others of the kind, most frequently engages my thoughts. * * * Well, I went to church: we had one of Mr. Pratt's best sermons, and I stayed the Communion. I could not but feel grateful to see so many persons who at least had some serious thoughts of religion—especially that Charles and his wife were of the number, and I may add, that I was also. I am not so ignorant of myself as to think that I have made any suitable advances. No. Every day's experience is a sufficient antidote against any such flattering delusion; for every day I see, and have reason to condemn, the folly, the insanity which immerses me—the whole of my mind and powers—in so trifling a portion of their interest as this world contains. But yet I feel it an inestimable blessing to have been conducted to the precincts and the threshold of truth, and to have some desires, vague and ineffectual as they are, after better things.

"In the evening I sat down, in a business-like manner, to my mental account. In casting up the incidental blessings of the year, I found none to compare with my illness; it gave such a life, such a reality and nearness, to my prospects of futurity; it told me, in language so conclusive and intelligible, that here is not my abiding city. It expounded so powerfully the Scriptural doctrine of Atonement, by showing what the award of my fate must be if it depended upon my own merits, and what that love is which offers to avert condemnation by the merits of another: in short, my sickness has been a source of happiness to me in every way."

In the autumn of the following year he again alludes to that "one religious subject which most frequently engaged his thoughts." After speaking of the death of his early friend, John Gurney, as "a loss hardly admitting of consolation," he adds,—

"But it is surely from the shortness of our vision that we

dwell so frequently on the loss of those who are dear to us. Are they gone to a better home? Shall we follow them? These are questions of millions and millions of centuries. The former is but a question of a few years. When I converse with these considerations, I cannot express what I think of the stupendous folly of myself and the rest of mankind. If the case could be so transposed, that our worldly businesses and pleasures were to last for ever, and our religion were to produce effects only for a few years, then, indeed, our, at least my, dedication of heart to present concerns would be reasonable and prudent; then I might justify the many hours and anxious thoughts devoted to the former, and might say to the latter, 'The few interrupted moments and wandering unfixed thoughts I spare you, are as much as your transitory nature deserves.' * * * Alas! alas! how is it that as children of this world we are wiser than as children of light!"

In the summer of the year 1815 he removed from London to a house at North End, Hampstead, that his children, now four in number, might have the benefit of country air. The following extract is from his commonplace book: —

"North End, Sunday, Aug. 6. 1815.

"Being too unwell to go to church, I have spent the morning (with occasional wanderings in the fields) in reading and pondering upon the Bible: viz. St. James's and St. John's epistles. How much sound wisdom and practical piety in the first, how devout and holy a spirit breathes through the second!—the one exposing, with a master's hand, the infirmities, the temptations, and the delusions of man; the other, evidencing the love he teaches, seems of too celestial a spirit to mingle much with human affairs, and perpetually reverts to the source of his consolation and hope: with him, Christ is all in all, the sum and substance of all his exhortations, the beginning and end of every chapter.

"I now sit down to recall some marked events which have lately happened. First then, Friday, July 7th, was an extraordinary day to me. In the morning I ascertained that all the hopes we had indulged of large profits in business were false. We were sadly disappointed, for I went to town in the morning some thousands of pounds richer in my own estimation than I returned

at night. This was my first trial; next, about nine o'clock, a dreadful explosion of gunpowder took place in a house adjacent to the brewery; eight lives were lost, and great damage done. For a long time it seemed beyond hope to expect to keep the fire from the premises. The morning changed me from affluence to competence, and the evening was likely to have converted competence into poverty.

"To finish all, at night my house was robbed. This, if we had heard it, might have seriously alarmed my wife, in her present delicate state of health. How easily can I bear the transitions of fortune, and see without murmuring, and even with cheerfulness, my golden hopes blighted! but 'bitter indeed and intimately keen,' would any wound be that affected *her*. I have often repeated these lines of Shakspeare: —

> ——— "'Steep me in poverty to the very lips,
> Give to captivity me and my utmost hopes,
> I still can find in some part of my soul
> A drop of patience—
> But there, where I have garner'd up my heart,' &c.

"On the following Tuesday I went to Weymouth, and found the affairs of a friend, in whom I am sincerely interested, in a very bad state. This is to me a subject of much anxiety; but on my return home I had another and a deeper trial. I found it was necessary to investigate ——'s business, which seems involved in much difficulty. These two events together have been very mortifying to me, but I have endeavoured to meet them with submissive fortitude. Yet I find that I can suffer my own misfortunes with comparative indifference, but cannot sit so easily under the misfortunes of those that are near to me; but in this I hope to improve, and to be enabled to look upon trials, in whatever form they appear, as visitations from the merciful hand of God. I hope my late uneasinesses have not been entirely thrown away upon me: they have brought me to feel the poverty and unsteadfastness of all human possessions, and to look upon life as a flower that falleth, while the grace and the fashion of it perisheth — as a vapour that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away. It has made me too (though still sadly deficient) more earnest and more frequent in my appeals and entreaties to God, that he would give me his wisdom to direct me, and his strength to support me; and, above all

that he would emancipate my heart from the shackles of the flesh, and fix my hopes beyond all that is in the world, 'the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eye, and the pride of life.' Turn my heart to thee, O Lord; make me to feel, daily and hourly to feel, as well as know — to act upon the persuasion, as well as to be persuaded — that only in thee I can rest in peace, and only in thy service I can act with wisdom."

To Mrs. Buxton, at Earlham.

"Hampstead, Sunday, Oct. 29. 1815.

"* * * I have all the week set my mind on writing to you to-day; but this is not the only temptation that operates at present, for if I have not your company I must have ———'s, who is in the next room and seems very desirous of improving my Sunday by edifying converse on shooting. I have been quite comfortable since I returned to town, found things in tolerable order, and have been as busy as a bee. I do not know when I have had so many things of some importance to manage or when I have spent my time in business more to my satisfac tion. My mind and heart have been instantly engaged in it, and I have thought as little of shooting, since I returned to business, as I did of business while I was shooting. I know you would not like the unsettlement of the plan I have in my head, which is, after a few years, to live somewhere quiet in the country, and go to town for one week in a month. I think that with strict unsparing rules, this is all that would be necessary: the unsettlement would be no objection to me, for I do not find that change from one employment to another quite different produces it; and I fancy that I could brew one hour, study mathematics the next, shoot the third, and read poetry the fourth, without allowing any one of these pursuits to interfere with the others. This habit of full engagement of the mind has its advantages in business and other things, but is attended with this serious disadvantage, that it immerses the mind so fully in its immediate object, that there is no room for thoughts of higher importance and more real moment to creep in. I feel this continually, — the hours and hours that I spend in utter forgetfulness of that which I well know to be the only thing of importance. How very great a portion of one's life there is in which one might as well be a heathen!"

"Spitalfields, Nov. 1. 1815.

"I went this evening to a general meeting of the adult school. I was very much interested by it, and made a speech, which was received with shouts, nay, roars of applause! The good that has already been done is quite extraordinary: exclusive of one hundred and fifty persons who have improved in reading, eighty-nine, who did not know their letters, can now read well. We had five exhibited, and their performance was grand; but the effect upon their *lives* is still better than on their *literature*. Then we had a variety of fine speeches. I do not much admire meetings of ladies and gentlemen, but the tradesmen speaking to the mechanics is a treat to me: first, it is so entertaining to hear them, such sublimity, such grandeur, such superfine images; one fine fellow harvested a rich crop of corn off a majestic oak, and the simile was received with a burst of applause. But if this is entertaining, the zeal and warmth with which they speak and *act* is very interesting; and I really prefer their blundering heartiness to the cool and chaste performances of more erudite orators."

Writing in February, 1816, after being engaged at a distance from home in settling the affairs of some near connections: —

"So ends my history; and I ought, and I do, feel thankful that circumstances have made me the instrument of doing some good, and communicating so much pleasure there. I found them all sad, and I believe they each felt that my visit had been a kind of blessing. So far, so good; but do not imagine that I take the credit, or am elated at my own achievements. I have felt thankful to be the agent, but I do not forget that I am only the agent. I often wonder at the slow progress I have made of late years in religion, but in this one respect I feel different. I see the hand of a directing Providence in the events of life, the lesser as well as the greater; and this is of great importance to me, for the belief that your actions, if attempted aright, are guided and directed by superior wisdom, is to me one of the greatest inducements to prayer: and I do think that the little trials I have met with have materially contributed to produce with me a habit of prayer."

Long before that period, to which he, at least, referred his first real acquaintance with the truths of Christianity, the peculiar features of his disposition had been cast in strong and permanent relief; and the religious acts of his mind are deeply stamped with the fashion of its native character. It possessed one element which beyond all others gave shape to the development of his religious principles. This was his power of realising the conceptions of his mind and imagination with scarcely less force and vividness than that which realised external objects. Thus he grasped the idea of a future state, not with a mere passive belief, but with a strong effective conviction, as *a matter of fact* of startling plainness, and which gave him to a remarkable degree a consciousness of the hollow vanity of all earthly pleasures and interests. But what chiefly marked his religious character was the absolute childlike confidence with which he clung to the guiding hand of his heavenly Father, wherever his path might lie. There was, in fact, no event in his life which he did not attribute to His immediate direction. "I do not want," he said, "to have religion proved to me: a superintending Providence is clear to demonstration. *There* is a proof of it," holding out his hand, and showing how perfect was its mechanism. This led to a constant habit of communicating his cares to his heavenly Father. "Prayer is throwing up the heart to God continually," he said, "not always using words, but casting up the thoughts to Him. Every thing leads me to prayer, and I always find it answered, both in little and great things." When anticipating that a material improvement would take place in his circumstances, his prayers were constant and fervent that the proposed advantage should not be granted him, unless it would be good for him and his family. "If it be denied

me," he observed, "I can only say and feel that I still thank God; and if it is appointed for me, I am sure it will be safe and good. I am as easy to leave it as if it concerned only a 5*l.* note." No one that ever attended his family prayers could avoid being struck by the intense earnestness with which he poured out his feelings upon his public undertakings before God. He spread the subject before Him, wrestling with Him in prayer for aid and guidance; and though he spared no exertions of his own, he always felt that God alone could give the increase. Nor when success had followed his efforts did he forget Him from whom that success had been derived. Indeed, he habitually received the will of God, not only with submission, but thankfulness.

Again, and again, and again, in his papers of religious meditations, does he recur to the different events of his life, and trace with grateful pleasure the moulding hand of Providence. "The clusters of mercies received" are enumerated repeatedly in careful detail, and his appointment to the advocacy of the oppressed and neglected is always included as a source of deep thankfulness and wonder that such as he should have been permitted thus to labour in his Master's service. This strong reliance on the presiding care of God grew with him year by year, as his experience widened, and he loved to count up the instances in which, as he firmly believed, he had seen the ways of himself and others directed by the hands of Providence to its own great ends. An unfinished paper, detailing various providential escapes he had met with, refers, after alluding to many earlier ones, to one that occurred in the winter of 1815:—

"Mr. Back and I," he says, "went into the brewery to survey the repairs which were going on; we were standing upon a plank, with only room for two, face to face; we changed places in

order that I might survey a spot to which he was directing my attention; his hat was on, I was uncovered: as soon as we had changed places, several bricks fell from the roof, and one struck his head; his hat in some measure averted the blow, but he never recovered the injury, and died shortly afterwards of an oppression on the brain."

To Joseph John Gurney, Esq.

"Hampstead, April 12. 1816.

"It is very true that I have been worried of late, but not about the Malt Tax, for that is only a question of profit, of one that I could not regulate, and I find no disposition in my mind to regret what is irremediable. The thing which has given me uneasiness is the discovery of what I consider errors in the management of the department of the brewery which has fallen to me lately; and these errors I am determined to cure. Now this involves much labour — but labour I do not regard — and some anxiety, considering my inexperience upon many points connected with it; but I cannot say that I have felt this much. The true cause of my disquietude arises from a certain feature in my own mind, which I can hardly describe; a kind of unregulated ardour in any pursuit which appears to me to be of great importance, which takes captive all my faculties and binds them down to that pursuit, and will not let them or me rest till it is accomplished. I hate this; it is so unpleasant to wake, and to go to sleep with your head full of vats and tubs; and I disapprove it more than I hate it. No man, I think, can have more abstract conviction of the folly and futility of such engagement of heart upon objects so utterly trifling and undurable. I see that it is an infirmity: I deeply feel that it chokes the good seed, and is a most pernicious weed, and I feel the breaches that it makes in my own quiet: yet so much am I its slave, that it will intrude into the midst of such reflections, and carry me off to my next gyle.* How sincerely I do often wish that I could direct this fervent energy about temporals into its proper channel — that I could be as warm about things of infinite importance, as I am about dust and ashes!

"If I cannot accomplish this, I wish we could divide it — I

* A "gyle" is the technical name for a brewing.

keep half for my business, and give you half for your book.* How can you, my dear brother, be languid and spiritless, with such a thing before you, and with such a capacity for doing it excellently? Are you not ashamed that I should be more anxious about making porter than you are about making Christians? At it, my dear fellow! at it with vigour; but when you find your mind unsuited for it, write me another letter, for the last was a great pleasure to

"Your affectionate brother,
"T. F. BUXTON."

* On the Evidences of the Christian Religion. See the Works of Joseph John Gurney.

CHAPTER V.

1816, 1817.

ADVENTURE WITH A MAD DOG. — DISTRESS IN SPITALFIELDS. — MR. BUXTON'S SPEECH. — LETTERS. — ESTABLISHMENT OF PRISON DISCIPLINE SOCIETY.—DEATH OF CHARLES BUXTON.—JOURNEY ON THE CONTINENT. — LETTERS. — INCIDENT AT THE BREWERY. — BOOK ON PRISON DISCIPLINE.

An incident which occurred during the summer of 1816 is thus mentioned by Mr. Buxton in a letter to his wife, who fortunately was absent at the time: —

"Spitalfields, July 15. 1816.

"As you must hear the story of our dog Prince, I may as well tell it you. On Thursday morning, when I got on my horse at S. Hoare's, David told me that there was something the matter with Prince, that he had killed the cat, and almost killed the new dog, and had bit at him and Elizabeth. I ordered him to be tied up and taken care of, and then rode off to town. When I got into Hampstead, I saw Prince covered with mud, and running furiously, and biting at every thing. I saw him bite at least a dozen dogs, two boys, and a man.

"Of course I was exceedingly alarmed, being persuaded he was mad. I tried every effort to stop him or kill him, or to drive him into some outhouse, but in vain. At last he sprang up at a boy, and seized him by the breast; happily I was near him, and knocked him off with my whip. He then set off towards London, and I rode by his side, waiting for some opportunity of stopping him. I continually spoke to him, but he paid no regard to coaxing or scolding. You may suppose I was seriously alarmed, dreading the immense mischief he might do, having seen him do so much in the few preceding minutes. I was terrified at the idea of his getting into Camden Town and London, and at length considering that, if ever there was an occasion that justified a risk of life, this was it, I determined to catch him myself. Happily he ran up to Pryor's gate, and I threw myself from

my horse upon him, and caught him by the neck: he bit at me and struggled, but without effect, and I succeeded in securing him, without his biting me. He died yesterday, raving mad.

"Was there ever a more merciful escape? Think of the children being gone! I feel it most seriously, but I cannot now write more fully. I have not been at all nervous about it, though certainly rather low, occasioned partly by this, and partly by some other things.

"I do not feel much fit for our Bible meeting on Wednesday —but I must exert myself.

"P.S. Write me word whether Fowell has any wound on his fingers, and if he has one made by the dog, let it be cut out immediately; mind, these are my positive orders."

He afterwards mentioned some particulars which he had omitted in this hurried letter.

"When I seized the dog," he said, "his struggles were so desperate that it seemed at first almost impossible to hold him, till I lifted him up in the air, when he was more easily managed, and I contrived to ring the bell. I was afraid that the foam, which was pouring from his mouth in his furious efforts to bite me, might get into some scratch, and do me injury; so with great difficulty I held him with one hand while I put the other into my pocket and forced on my glove; then I did the same with my other hand, and at last the gardener opened the door, saying, 'What do you want?' 'I've brought you a mad dog, replied I; and telling him to get a strong chain, I walked into the yard, carrying the dog by his neck. I was determined not to kill him, as I thought, if he should prove not to be mad, it would be a great satisfaction to the three persons whom he had bitten. I made the gardener, who was in a terrible fright, secure the collar round his neck and fix the other end of the chain to a tree, and then walking to its furthest range, with all my force, which was nearly exhausted by his frantic struggles, I flung him away from me, and sprang back. He made a desperate bound after me, but finding himself foiled, he uttered the most fearful yell I ever heard. All that day he did nothing but rush to and fro, champing the foam which gushed from his jaws; we threw him meat, and he snatched at it with fury, but instantly dropped it again.

"The next day, when I went to see him, I thought the chain seemed worn, so I pinned him to the ground between the prongs of a pitchfork, and then fixed a much larger chain round his neck. When I pulled off the fork, he sprang up and made a dash at me, which snapped the old chain in two. He died in forty-eight hours from the time he went mad."

He writes to his wife a day or two afterwards: —

"I shot all the dogs and drowned all the cats. The man and boys who were bitten are doing pretty well: their wounds were immediately attended to, cut, and burnt out.

"What a terrible business it was! You must not scold me for the risk I ran; what I did I did from a conviction that it was my duty, and I never can think that an over cautious care of self in circumstances where your risk may preserve others is so great a virtue as you seem to think it. I do believe that if I had shrunk from the danger, and others had suffered in consequence, I should have felt more pain than I should have done had I received a bite."

The winter of 1816 set in early, and with great severity: the silk trade was almost stagnant, and the weavers in Spitalfields, always trembling on the brink of starvation, were plunged into the deepest misery. It was increased by the constant influx into the parish of the poorest class of London work-people, who could find no lodging elsewhere. A soup society had been long before established, but the distress far exceeded the means provided for its alleviation. Under these circumstances it was determined to hold a meeting on the subject at the Mansion House. Mr. Buxton and Mr. Samuel Hoare delayed their usual visit to Norfolk, in order to explore and assist in relieving the sufferings of the Spitalfields poor.

To Mrs. Buxton, at Earlham.

"Spitalfields, Nov. 9. 1816.

"* * * S. Hoare and I came from Hampstead to attend a committee this morning, and afterwards visited the poor. The

wretchedness was great indeed, but I felt most compassion for a poor old creature of eighty, living alone without a fire or blanket. She seemed quite bewildered by the sight of silver; her twilight of intellect lost in gratitude and amazement. Poor old thing! that she, with all the infirmities of age, and without one earthly consolation, should look upon the prospect of a good meal as a cause of extravagant joy and real happiness, and that we, with the command of every comfort, in full strength, without a bodily want, should ever repine at trifling discomfitures, is, I hope, a lesson. We are going to have a public meeting, and I trust a profitable one, for without a large supply of money we must suspend our operations. George Kett sent me 50*l.* to-day."

"Spitalfields, Nov. 22. 1816.

"I did not write to you yesterday because really I had not a moment's time; the committees and my own business occupy every moment. I had a pleasant journey up to town. I had much upon my mind—our conversation about the eclipse. The vastness of the creation is indeed a subject for meditation. 'The heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament showeth his handiwork.' 'When I consider the stars which thou hast made, and the heavens which are the work of thy hand, what is man that thou art mindful of him?' How truly do these words describe the thoughts to which the vast spectacle of nature, especially the heavenly bodies, rolling in their appointed orbits, give rise! What a sermon these are upon the mightiness of the Creator, and upon the insignificance of man! and yet that we, who are truly dust and nothingness, should have the presumption to defy the power of the Almighty, to resist his commands, and to place our whole souls and hearts upon that which he tells us is but vanity; this is (if nothing else were) a demonstration that the heart of man is 'deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked.' On the other hand, that a Being so infinitely great should condescend to invite us to our duty, and to call that duty his service, proves as strongly that he has crowned us with loving kindness and tender mercy.

"I am well, and our proceedings about the poor prosper;—but oh, my speech! When shall I be able to think of it? I fear that I shall go to the meeting with it all in a jumble, and

this would be wicked, as it would injure the good cause. I do try, I hope, not to mingle too much of self in my earnest desires for its success, and I am not forgetful of my usual resource in difficulty—prayer.

"I am now going to the workhouse. I shall reach Earlham on Tuesday. S. Hoare and Abraham Plastow will be with me, and I hope the latter will be treated with deserved distinction, as he was for the first twelve years of my life the dearest friend I had."

"Nov. 27. 1816.

"Well, our meeting went off capitally. I felt very flat, and did not go through the topics I meant to touch upon, and upon the whole considered it as a kind of failure; but as I had entreated that what was best might be done, I did not feel at all disheartened; but, to my great surprise, all others took a very different sense of it.

"Tell dear Priscy I send her the 'Morning Chronicle,' that she may read Papa's speech, and I hope it will make her desirous of serving the poor."

A brief extract may be given from this speech. After mentioning the causes which had produced, he says, "a degree, an expanse of distress utterly beyond my powers to describe," he continues —

"I could detain you till midnight with the scenes we have witnessed. From these rough minutes which I hold in my hand, taken on the spot, in the very houses of the poor, drawn not from the fictions of a warm imagination, but from scenes of actual life—from the sad realities before us, I could disclose to you a faithful though a faint picture of such desperate calamity and unutterable ruin, that the heart must be stony indeed that did not sicken at the sight. First, I would lead you to the roof of a house hardly deserving the name of a garret; there sat three human beings, each seventy years of age—each with the ghastly lineaments of famine; a few bricks were their only chair and their only table; a little of our soup their only provision; a little straw and some shreds of an old coat their only bed! Next, I would show you a family of nine; the father disabled—the mother sickly—their furniture, their bed, their looms—every article of present use, the very implements of future labour, had

been surrendered to the demands of hunger! I will not exhaust your feelings by further recitals of what has met our eyes, but hasten to a larger topic. * * * * * * *

"My Lord, I feel more and more that I cannot do justice to the distress. I wish I could prevail upon you to see it with your own eyes. Come when you please, select almost your own street, almost your own house in that street, your own room in that house, and I undertake that in that room you will find a proof that our picture is faint and feeble. Come amongst us, and we will show you the father of a large family, whom we found in the act of pulling down his stove, to exchange it for food. The dread of future cold was less violent than the cravings of immediate hunger. Come by day, and we will lead you to a widow in the last stage of illness, yet—the only blanket of the dying wretch has been sent to procure bread! Come by night, and we will show you the baskets and the sheds of our markets filled with these wretched creatures—there they find their nightly lodging, and there amongst its scraps and refuse they pick out their daily food. * * In ordinary times the poor are the best friends of the poor. There is (and happy is it) a sympathy in affliction (we find it as a ray of light amid the gloom), a fellow-feeling in distress, a kind of benefit society to which all the wretched are free,—a society not indeed enrolled and registered by Act of Parliament, but by higher authority, and with more awful sanction, by the instincts which Providence has implanted in the human heart; but this is a virtue for better times. The poor man can hardly support himself, and therefore can hardly assist others. I do not mean to say that he does not. We have met with instances which have exalted our respect for human nature—instances which recall the widow recorded in the New Testament, who 'out of her want gave all her living;' and the widow of Sarepta in the Old Testament, whose whole possession was 'a handful of meal in a barrel, and a drop of oil in a cruse,' yet she was willing to share them with the afflicted stranger. But if this prove that the poor are not bereft of every ordinary support, is it not a lesson to us? If the poor man who is obliged to deny his unsatiated appetites,—who, having divided sufficient from his only loaf to support life, but not to satisfy hunger, hides the remainder for the next day's meal,—if he yet find some place for mercy in his soul, and, miserable himself, is

yet impelled to share his remaining crust with the more miserable,—if the strong impulse of humanity urges him to so dear a sacrifice, does it not teach the man who is clothed in soft raiment and fares sumptuously every day, to give something more than the crumbs that fall from his table to the wretchedness that surrounds his gate? But why this superior mercy in the poor? Because he has learned it in the school of affliction. He knows what it is to want bread, and this has opened his heart and enlivened his affections for those who are exposed to the rigour of the season and the craving importunities of hunger; but the rich man cannot feel this. He can experimentally know nothing of what it is, when the poor man, willing to strain every nerve in labour, is denied the employment which might stanch the tears of his wife and appease the cries of his children,—when, like the wretch I have mentioned, he is willing to suffer, if he might suffer alone, firm against his own afflictions, but, when he looks around him, sunk to the effeminacy of tears."

He might fairly be surprised by the universal attention which this speech received. Nothing could be more commendatory than the mention made of it in the newspapers; and letters of congratulation poured in from all sides. One from Mr. Wilberforce, the first written by him to his future ally and successor, may be deemed almost prophetic.

"My dear Sir, "Kensington Gore, Nov. 28. 1816.

"I must in three words express the real pleasure with which I have both read and heard of your successful effort on Tuesday last, in behalf of the hungry and the naked. * * * But I cannot claim the merit of being influenced only by regard for the Spitalfields sufferers, in the pleasure I have received from your performances at the meeting. It is partly a selfish feeling, for I anticipate the success of the efforts which I trust you will one day make in other instances, in an assembly in which I trust we shall be fellow-labourers, both in the motives by which we are actuated, and in the objects to which our exertions will be directed.

"I am, my dear Sir,

"Yours sincerely,

"W. WILBERFORCE."

The speech reappeared in publications of the most widely different character. It was republished by the Spitalfields Benevolent Society, as the best means of creating sympathy with their exertions; it was republished by Hone and the democrats, as the best statement of the miseries permitted under the existing government; and it was republished by the friends of that government, "because," said they, "it forms so beautiful a contrast to the language of those wretched demagogues, whose infamous doctrines would increase the evils they affect to deplore."

"By this one meeting at the Mansion House," says the report of the Spitalfields Benevolent Society, "43,369*l.* were raised." Two days after it had been held, Lord Sidmouth sent for Mr. Buxton, to inform him, that "the Prince had been so pleased by the spirit and temper of the meeting, and so strongly felt the claims that had been urged, that he had sent them 5000*l.*"

With these exertions for the poor around him, Mr. Buxton's public career may be said to have commenced. He was now launched upon that stream of labour for the good of others, along which his course lay for the remainder of his life. His letters show the eagerness of his desire to be employing his energies in warring against the evils around him. "I want to be living in a higher key," he remarked, "to do some good before I die." His prayers were incessant that God would employ him as an instrument of spreading his kingdom, and of doing good to mankind. He had great delight in the service of his Lord and Master; nor did he ever forget to thank God with deep gratitude when any opportunity, however trifling, was afforded him of exerting himself for others. To one of his relations, who had

entered upon a benevolent undertaking which required considerable personal sacrifices, he writes,—

"For my part, I cannot lament for and pity those who make great sacrifices in compliance with conscience; such dedication of self is, in my view, much more a matter of envy. Assuredly, if we could look at such sacrifices throughout their whole extent, in their consequences here to others, and hereafter to ourselves, we should perceive that the permission to be so engaged is a privilege of inestimable value. I am certain that you are only actuated by a conviction of duty, and shall I repine and grieve because you are enabled to follow so high a director? Or shall I not rather heartily rejoice that you are called to such a service, and that the call is not resisted? I often think of those verses in the Acts, 'rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for his name; and daily in the Temple, and in every house, they ceased not to teach and to preach Jesus Christ.' And so I am half inclined to envy you, and more than half to wish that, somehow or other, I were as well engaged."

It was no part of his character to indulge in vague desires without a bold struggle for their accomplishment. Having done what he could in relieving the miseries of his poor neighbours, he soon entered upon a wider field of benevolence.

One day, while walking past Newgate with Mr. Samuel Hoare, their conversation turned upon the exertions of their sister-in-law Mrs. Fry, and her companions, for the improvement of the prisoners within its walls; and this suggested the idea of employing themselves in a similar manner. They soon entered into communication with Mr. William Crawford, Mr. Peter Bedford, and other gentlemen who were also anxious to improve the condition, at that time deplorable to the last degree, of the English jails.

The exertions of Mrs. Fry and her associates had prepared the way; public attention had been drawn to the subject; and in 1816 the Society for the Reformation of

Prison Discipline was formed. In the list of the committee, Mr. Buxton's name stands between those of Dr. Lushington and Lord Suffield (then the Hon. E. Harbord), both of whom were afterwards so closely associated with him in the attack upon negro slavery.

On January the 5th, 1817, he writes from Hampstead to Mrs. Buxton,—

"After I had written to you yesterday, I went with Peter Bedford and Charles on a visit to Newgate. I saw four poor creatures who are to be executed on Tuesday next. Poor things! God have mercy on them! The sight of them was sufficient for that day. I felt no further inclination to examine the prison. It has made me long much that my life may not pass quite uselessly; but that, in some shape or other, I may assist in checking and diminishing crime and its consequent misery. Surely it is in the power of all to do something in the service of their Master; and surely I, among the rest, if I were now to begin and endeavour, to the best of my capacity, to serve Him, might be the means of good to some of my fellow-creatures. This capacity is, I feel, no mean talent, and attended with no inconsiderable responsibility. I must pray that I may at length stir myself up, and be enabled to feel somewhat of the real spirit of a missionary, and that I may devote myself, my influence, my time, and, above all, my affections, to the honour of God, and the happiness of man. My mission is evidently not abroad, but it is not less a mission on that account. I feel that I may journey through life by two very different paths, and that the time is now come for choosing which I will pursue. I may go on as I have been going on, not absolutely forgetful of futurity, nor absolutely devoted to it. I may get riches and repute, and gratify my ambition, and do some good and more evil; and, at length, I shall find all my time on earth expended, and in retracing my life I shall see little but occasions lost, and capacities misapplied. The other is a path of more labour and less indulgence. I may become a real soldier of Christ; I may feel that I have no business on earth but to do his will and to walk in his ways, and I may direct every energy I have to the service of others. Of

these paths, I know which I would most gladly choose: 'but what I would, that I do not; but what I hate, that do I.' In short, the cares, and the pleasures, and the business of this world choke the good seed, and we are perpetually deceived. We would sow to the spirit, and we sow to the flesh; we desire heaven, and we are chained to earth."

He now began to entertain thoughts of entering Parliament, and at the election of February, 1817, he went down to Weymouth, at the invitation of Mr. W. Williams, to stand on the same interest. He did not, however, offer himself as a candidate.

"Weymouth, Feb. 1817.

"I am far from regretting that I came, as I do not doubt it will secure me an independent seat next election: that word 'independent' has been the obstacle upon this occasion. I intend to spend a good portion of the next two years in preparation for the House. I hope I shall either do good, or receive pleasure, when I get there: as yet, I have had in politics neither one nor the other. I am pining for home: nothing suits me worse than this kind of busy leisure; too much to do to have time to myself, and too little to do to occupy my time."

"Hampstead, April 5.

"Last Sunday I was at Fakenham, with Charles, who is very unwell. God grant he may recover! I have much to thank God about with regard to him, his increased and increasing piety and seriousness. For myself, I sometimes fear my treasure is too much in my business, it is too much my amusement, the topic to which I turn with pleasure. South says, 'Whatsoever a man accounts his treasure, that he places his whole delight in: it entertains his eye, refreshes his fancy, feeds his thoughts, and affords him a continual feast.' God grant that I may so meditate in his law, and so dwell within the walls of his spiritual temple, that He, and my duties towards Him, may be my chief delight."

Soon afterwards he became absorbed in anxiety about his brother Charles, who had shown symptoms of a de-

cline, which at length proved fatal. A more grievous calamity could scarcely have befallen Mr. Buxton. Though their characters stood far apart, the two brothers had some points of strong and endearing resemblance. The lively gladness of heart which threw a constant sunshine over the countenance of the younger, would often relax the graver brow of the elder brother: and, indeed, though the pressure of care and business gave Mr. Buxton an habitually grave aspect, and though it was a part of his character to be so absorbed by the pursuit he had in hand as to seem abstracted, yet there was in him throughout life a vein of playfulness which showed itself often when least expected. Even when he himself was somewhat silent and oppressed, he courted the cheerfulness of others, and delighted in it. But the friend that could best enliven him was lost when his brother sunk into the grave.

To Mrs. Buxton.

"My dearest Wife, Weymouth, July 4. 1817.

"How difficult it is to pour out all the feelings of this day; memorable as it will be to me, for as bitter pain on the one hand, and as strong and joyful gratitude on the other, as ever I passed through! After such a tumult of feelings, I am now quite dull and confused, hardly crediting that it is anything but a dream, or that he that was my earliest friend, and so very near my heart, and with whom the ties of friendship were so exquisitely tender, should be passed away for ever, or rather for the short period of this pilgrimage; but if I feel the grief of having these ten thousand links of brotherhood snapped asunder, I hope and I think that I do more strongly feel the strong and sufficient consolations that surround us. Dear as he is to me (and there is an inexpressible fondness over his memory), I would not recall him to earth. If this world be a state of probation, he has passed through it, and is, I am persuaded, with the Saviour on whom he depended. I cannot say the satisfaction I feel in his state of mind of late — the deepest humility as to

himself, mixed with the firmest confidence in the sufficient merits of Christ. * * * I will now tell you events as they have passed. At Andover I found a letter from Anna, saying he was worse; and that I might be too late. I shall not easily forget the ride between Andover and Salisbury. I could only see the dark side, the deep and irreparable loss, and one chief joy of my life gone for ever. The remainder of the journey to Dorchester was rather anxious than any thing else. I particularly desired to see him once more, and I strongly hoped to have that comfort, but at Dorchester I heard of his peaceful end. Poor dear fellow! Between that and Weymouth, after indulging for a short time in groanings for us who remain, I felt the deepest gratitude on his account. I was so happy in his fate, and so sensible of the all-righteous hand which directed it! * * * Infinitely beyond all, how merciful and gladdening it is that those words, 'in sure and certain hope of a blessed resurrection,' are not at all too strong to express my convictions about him! He is bound to the very inmost recesses of my heart, when I recall and call up in my heart a thousand endearing recollections, his tenderness towards me, his playful manner, his ready sympathy in all that touched me, his nice sense of honour and delicate feelings. When all these rush into my mind (and they are twined round all the events that are past), I should be a mourner indeed if I had not an unfailing sense of consolation, 'a present help in time of trouble,' in the conviction of his happiness, and in the earnest hope of being again restored to him, in a state free from the impurities and imperfections of this world. Oh! how I do long to take to the warning of his example, to detach myself from the frailties and vanities of this world, to become a disciple and soldier of our Lord Jesus Christ, to remember 'righteousness, temperance, and the judgment to come!' and how I do feel that this admonition, like other deep ones which I have had, may pass away, and that I may be one of those of whom it may be said, 'it would have been better for him never to have known the ways of righteousness!'

"His being now in the land of Spirits before his Maker, and in the company of his Redeemer, in whom he so fully believed, and whom he loved, gives to me a familiarity with death which I never experienced. There is, I have almost thought, a community and sameness of feeling between brothers which is only

equalled by that between husband and wife. Oh! how I feel that this is gone! but I do not forget that I have others left who are perhaps as dear to me, besides yourself, my love. I went into the room by myself, wishing to return thanks, with his remains before me, for the inexpressible mercy displayed to him, and to pray that we who are left may be preserved from evil.

"Martha told me that Charles, on Tuesday, could not swallow; when she observed how sorry she was, he answered by repeating the story of the Samaritan woman at the well, and concluded by saying 'Though I cannot eat, and though I cannot drink, yet if I can but drink one glass of cold water at that living spring, I shall never thirst any more.'

"When somebody said to him, 'We must repent and then we shall be forgiven by Christ,' he said, 'You begin at the wrong end: we must first seek Christ, then He will give us repentance and forgiveness.' He was fully aware the last moment was approaching, and his soul seemed at times as if it were already in heaven. Send this to my aunt Gurney and Anna; with my dearest love to all."

"July 6. 1817.

"If we only consider the loss we have sustained, we must go mourning all the day long; if we consider the gain to him, it extracts the anguish from the wound. I cannot help following him in his present state. He, with whose views, and prospects, and feelings, and joys, I have till within a few days been so conversant, is now in a scene so new, so grand, so inexpressible, so infinitely beyond the rags and vanities of earth."—"I do not expect to feel Charles's funeral much," he says in another letter; "I have dwelt so much upon him as ascended to heaven, that I cannot, or rather do not so very closely connect the idea of him and his remains. I mean, in committing *them* to the earth, I do not feel as if I were committing *him* there."

Twenty years afterwards, in reviewing the leading occurrences of his life, he thus refers to this event:—

"I know of no tie, that of a husband and wife excepted, which could be stronger than the one which united Charles and me. We were what the lawyers call 'tenants in common' of every thing. He was, I think, the most agreeable person I ever knew.

A kind of original humour played about his conversation. It was not wit; it was anything rather than that species of humour which provokes loud laughter: it was not exactly naïveté, though that comes nearest to it; it was an intellectual playfulness which provided for every hour, and extracted from every incident a fund of delicate merriment. He died at Weymouth in the year 1817;—and Thou knowest, O Lord, and Thou only, how deeply I loved, and how long and how intensely I lamented him."

His brother's widow and children were the objects of his tender care. He took a house for them near his own at Hampstead, and as his brother-in-law, Mr. Samuel Hoare, resided in the same place, the three families became united in habits of the closest intercourse.

In the winter of 1817, Mr. and Mrs. Buxton and Mr. S. and Mr. J. J. Gurney went over to France, with the Rev. Francis Cunningham, who was anxious to establish a branch of the Bible Society at Paris. Mr. Buxton and his brothers-in-law took a great interest in this undertaking, and were also desirous to procure information, as to the excellent systems of prison discipline adopted in the jails of Antwerp and Ghent.

In crossing over to Boulogne the party met with an adventure which might have turned out seriously. Soon after leaving Dover, they were surrounded by a dense fog, in which they drifted about for two days and nights, without being able to conjecture what course the vessel was pursuing. To this anxiety actual suffering was soon added, for the packet contained many passengers, and there was no sleeping accommodation, and scarcely a morsel of food on board. A few mouldy biscuits and a piece of cheese were furnished at a high price by one of the sailors, with which the hungry party were obliged to be contented. In the course of the second night the braying of an ass warned

them of their near approach to land, and having narrowly avoided running the vessel ashore, a short dispersion of the fog at length enabled them to enter the harbour of Calais. After referring to this incident, Mr. Buxton proceeds in his diary:—

"I would not willingly forget the lesson taught of the value of food—of the pain of being restricted in it; these lines will recall my feelings:—

'Take physic, Pomp,
Expose thyself to feel what wretches feel,
That thou mayest shake the superflux to them.'"

The following are extracts from his diary:—

"Nov. 1. 1817.

"One cannot pass over from Dover to Calais without being struck with the immense expenditure which has been lavished upon the animosities of the two countries. We hear with astonishment of some hundred thousand pounds raised in England for the dispersion of the Bible through the world; of 20,000*l.* per annum raised to send missionaries to communicate to heathen nations the blessings of Christianity. Such exertions excite our admiration, elevate our country in our eyes, and even exalt our nature. But turn for a moment to the opposite picture, and observe ten times these enormous sums expended upon twenty acres of land at Dover, and as many at Calais,—not to promote civilisation or happiness, but for purposes of mutual hostility, defiance, aggression, and bloodshed. I do verily believe that the true, genuine, valorous, military spirit, is the true and genuine spirit inspired by the enemy of man, and I hope that I shall never refuse or be ashamed to avow these strange, extraordinary sentiments."

"Paris Nov. 10.

"Thus far I have thoroughly enjoyed my journey; the people are civil and engaging, and full of life. What an odd thing it is that our mutual rulers should have deemed it expedient that we should have spent the last twenty-three years in cutting each other's throats; and that we should so often have illuminated at the grateful intelligence that ten thousand of these our lively friends were killed and twenty thousand wounded! Surely we

must now think this a strange reason for rejoicing. Seeing the natives is an antidote to the pleasure of destroying them. If it be our duty to love our enemies, the military preparations are an extraordinary mode of displaying our affection. In truth it is a sad thing, that

> 'Straits interposed
> Make enemies of nations, which had else,
> Like kindred drops, been melted into one.'

"11*th*.—We went to Versailles to breakfast. Almost every bush has its statue. The fauns, tritons, Neptunes, heroes, Venuses, Dianas, mixed with the statues of Louis le Grand and Louis le Désiré (whose features defy all meaning), present an assemblage of fiction and fact, much to the advantage of the former.

"After visiting Versailles, we went to St. Cloud. This is a very comfortable and splendid abode, the furniture very beautiful and costly, and as much surpassing Versailles in cheerfulness as falling short of it in melancholy grandeur. It is the second record of departed glory which we have seen to-day: the third comes more home to our hearts. We this night, on our arrival at Paris, heard of the death of our Princess. We have all felt it as if she were bound to ourselves by the ties of kindred.

"12*th*.—We went to the Palace of the Luxemburg, and there saw Talleyrand;—a bishop in the reign of the King—an abjurer of Christianity when reason was deified—prime minister of Buonaparte till his Spanish expedition—one of the first to betray him—on his return offering his insidious assistance again to betray him—and now in full power!

"15*th*.—Went to the Legislative Assembly, and saw the rooms for the Peers. Wonderfully smart—too much so. Very different, indeed, are both these chambers from the negligent grandeur of the British Parliament.

"16*th*.—Francis Cunningham and I went to various persons, for the purpose of establishing a Bible Society. We found only M. Juillerat at home, with whom we had some encouraging conversation. His description of the state of religion in the country is truly deplorable. The Protestants are sadly indifferent, and the Roman Catholics are either quite philosophically careless or thoroughly bigoted.

"Baxter says, in his Life, something of this kind: — 'I did not know till now what a great sin tyranny is, which thus prevents the propagation of the Gospel:' and the difficulties we have this day felt in the establishment of the Bible Society from the restraints of Government, have united me in the same feeling.

"Went again to the Louvre, and greatly admired the Italian paintings; and, particularly, some of Claude's. I cannot like Rubens' great, sprawling, allegorical Deities."

His diary contains very full particulars relative to those prisons at Ghent and Antwerp which it was one purpose of his journey to examine. He was especially struck with the admirable management of the Maison de Force in the former town, and he determined to lay his account of it before the Prison Discipline Society in London.

"At Ghent we were told that when Buonaparte was emperor he demanded of the Roman Catholic College an approbation of his marriage with Maria Louisa, which they steadily refused. Soon after, he sent them a bishop, who was not properly ordained by the Pope, and they refused to obey him. On this he ordered a detachment of soldiers to surround the college, and to take every priest and student. He then sent them all off to his armies as soldiers; and of 330 thus sent but fifteen returned alive!"

"Sunday, Calais.

"Here we arrived at ten o'clock this morning, being compelled by the regulations of the fortified towns to travel some distance on this day. We regret this, as we would not willingly lend even our feeble countenance to the violation of the Sabbath, which this country everywhere presents.

"We all felt grateful for the encouraging intelligence that a Bible Society had been formed in Paris. I ardently hope that it may be the means of much direct good by the circulation of the Scriptures, and of much indirect good by causing intercourse between the Protestants of France and England. France, indeed, needs everything that can be done for her religious welfare. Religion is, as it were, almost abolished. I speak

generally, but I trust, and indeed I am persuaded, that this generality admits of very many exceptions; but altogether, there is little appearance of religion. The amusements and businesses of the Sunday — the utter absence of the Scriptures — the perpetual reiteration of 'Mon Dieu' in every sentence — the indifference as to truth — in short, all that strikes the eye and the ear, indicates the absence of any spiritual understanding."

Upon Mr. Buxton's return to England he communicated to the Prison Discipline Society the information which he had acquired with respect to the Maison de Force at Ghent, and this led to a request from the committee that his description of it might be published. "When I sat down to this task," he says, in the preface to his book, "the work insensibly grew upon my hands. It was necessary to prove that evils and grievances did exist in this country, and to bring home to these causes the increase of corruption and depravity. For this purpose repeated visits to prisons were requisite."

Accordingly, accompanied by Mr. Hoare, Mr. William Crawford, and others, he visited at different times the principal London jails, and examined with the utmost care into every part of the system pursued in them.

To the Rev. Francis Cunningham.

"Spitalfields, Dec. 1817.

"Since my return I have been much engaged in the London prisons, and my inquiries have developed a system of folly and wickedness which surpasses belief. A noise must be made about it, and (will you believe it?) I am going to turn author, and am preparing a pamphlet upon the subject of prisons.

"The recollection of our journey acquires new charms in my eyes, and I heartily rejoice we were induced to take it.

"Tell C——that if the result should in any way diminish the quantum of misery that is endured, and of vice which is hatched in our prisons — if it should be the means of encouraging the Protestant ministers of France, and of dispersing the Bible

through its forlorn population — I shall think we were almost repaid for the terrible, monstrous, shocking dangers we incurred when exposed to all the horrors of a *calm*.

"Can you give Major Close the name of the regiment at Mont Cassel which had no Bibles? If so, they will be immediately supplied."

To a Friend.

"Dec. 18. 1817.

"I never enjoyed my home more. I hardly ever was so sensible of enjoyment in it as since my return from France. To be happy I must be employed, and on a useful object, for between ourselves (but this is a profound secret) I am sick of having my heart in my vats."

He closed the year 1817 with the following reflections in his common-place book: —

"This year has been checquered with events of deep interest — some joyful and some dressed in the darkest sable. But how encouraging is it to be able to recognise in all, and especially in the mournful circumstances of the year, the hand of a merciful Providence! This day last year I spent with my beloved brother; together we went to our usual place of worship, to hear our (especially his) beloved minister *, and together we wandered through the future.

'But God has wisely hid from human eyes
The dark decrees of Fate.'

"Very soon afterwards I was called to Weymouth to the election. I need not now enter into the reasons which induced me not to stand; suffice it to say, I would not be dependent. With my determination I have been well satisfied. I fancy my election at a future period is very probable: if it will tend to my real good or the good of others, I believe it will be so determined by Providence; if not, I earnestly pray God to avert the fulfilment of my wishes. I am too well aware of my own blindness to have my heart much set on it. * * * While I was at Weymouth, my sweet boy, Harry, got through the bars of his nursery window, and was discovered merely holding by

* The Rev. Josiah Pratt.

his hands with the utmost unconcern. What was not his mother — what was not I spared! * * * What shall I render to the Lord for all his mercies to me, of which (next to his inestimable love in the redemption of the world) my wife is far the greatest? * * * I often wonder at the goodness of God, in giving to one so unworthy so rich a treasure.

"Soon after my return from Weymouth began the heaviest affliction of my life — the illness, the gradual and perceptible decay, alas! the death of my dearest brother. No day passes in which something or other does not recall his beloved image, his lively manners, his unity of heart. I trust that few days pass in which I forget to thank God for this dispensation, and to rejoice that he has, as I doubt not he has, 'for this corruptible put on incorruption.'

"His widow and her three children have been staying with us for some time, —much to my comfort, and, I hope, somewhat to hers. I have read and heard of acts of faithful affection; but I never heard, or read, or saw anything to compare with the affection, kindness, attention, and generosity displayed by S. Hoare to her.

"On Saturday last, in consequence of an almost obsolete promise to sleep in town when all the other partners were absent, I slept at Brick-lane. S. Hoare has complained to me that several of our men were employed on the Sunday. To inquire into this, in the morning I went into the brewhouse, and was led to the examination of a vat containing 170 ton weight of beer. I found it in what I considered a dangerous situation, and I intended to have it repaired the next morning. I did not anticipate any immediate danger, as it had stood so long. When I got to Wheeler-street chapel, I did as I usually do in cases of difficulty,—I craved the direction of my heavenly Friend, who will give rest to the burthened, and instruction to the ignorant.

"From that moment I became very uneasy, and instead of proceeding to Hampstead, as I had intended, I returned to Brick-lane. On examination, I saw, or thought I saw, a still further declension of the iron pillars which supported this immense weight; so I sent for a surveyor; but before he came I became apprehensive of immediate danger, and ordered the beer, though in a state of fermentation, to be let out. When he arrived, he gave it as his decided opinion that the vat was

actually sinking, that it was not secure for five minutes, and that, if we had not emptied it, it would probably have fallen. Its fall would have knocked down our steam-engine, coppers, roof, with two great iron reservoirs full of water,—in fact, the whole Brewery.

"How the new year may pass who can tell? I may not see the end of it; but these are the active objects I propose for myself:—

"To write a pamphlet on Prison Discipline.

"To establish a Savings Bank in Spitalfields.

"To recommence the sale of salt fish in Spitalfields.

"To attend to the London Hospital, and to endeavour to make the clergyman perform his duties, or to get him superseded.

"To establish a new Bible Association.

"May the grace of God assist me in these objects; may He sanctify my motives, and guard me from pride, and may I use my utmost exertions, making His will mine."

In February of the ensuing year he published his work entitled 'An Inquiry whether Crime be produced or prevented by our present System of Prison Discipline.' While composing it, he always began his writing with prayer that he might "be guided aright, and that he might do his duty without any regard to self, but simply for the service of God." The work was received with a degree of attention to which he had never aspired, running through six editions in the course of the first year; and a very considerable impulse was given to general feeling upon the subject of which it treated. The work was thus alluded to in the House of Commons by Sir James Mackintosh.

"The question of our penal code, as relating to prison abuses, has been lately brought home to the feelings of every man in the country by a work so full of profound information, of such great ability, of such chaste and commanding eloquence, as to give that House and the country a firm assurance that its author could not embark in any undertaking which would not reflect equal credit upon himself and upon the object of his labours."

Mr. Wilberforce wrote to him on the same subject, and, after warmly congratulating him on the weight it appeared to carry, he adds,—

"May it please God to continue to animate you with as much benevolent zeal, and to direct it to worthy objects! I hope you will come soon into Parliament, and be able to contend in person, as well as with your pen, for the rights and happiness of the oppressed and the friendless. I claim you as an ally in this blessed league."

The good effects of this book were not confined to England: it was translated into French, and distributed on the Continent. It even reached Turkey; and in India, a gentleman of the name of Blair, having chanced to read it, was induced to examine into the state of the Madras jails. He found them in a wretched condition, and did not rest till a complete reformation had been effected.

CHAPTER VI.

1818, 1819.

ELECTION, 1818.—LETTER FROM MR. J. J. GURNEY.—THOUGHTS ON ENTERING PARLIAMENT.—FIRST SPEECH ON CRIMINAL LAW.—COMMITTEES ON CRIMINAL LAW AND PRISON DISCIPLINE.—LETTERS.—DEBATE ON THE MANCHESTER RIOT.

In the spring of 1818, a dissolution of Parliament took place, and Mr. Buxton now offered himself as a candidate for Weymouth. He did not take this step without much prayer for guidance in the matter. "It appears to me," he said, "to be the sphere in which I could do most for my Master's service, but I am perfectly willing to fill a lower place. It is only that I shall be as a common soldier instead of an officer: if I can but serve Him, let Him choose what work I shall do." While upon his canvass, he thus writes from Bellfield :—

"June 4th.

"I think we shall have a contest and a sharp one, and the result is doubtful; however, I am very comfortable, and not at all anxious. If it is right for me to succeed, I do not doubt I shall; and if it is not right, I hope I shall not. I should return to privacy and the dear enjoyments of my own family without disappointment or vexation, and I think personally as well content with little as with great things. Joseph, in our ride from Hampstead to London, mentioned a text which has been a very comfortable companion to me. 'In all thy ways acknowledge Him, and He will direct thy paths.' This text and another, 'Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose heart is stayed on Thee,' are constantly in my thoughts. My continual prayer is, that the Lord would work that termination which his infinite wisdom knows to be the best; which is, I think, very probably praying against my own success."

"June 8.

"I am easy in my mind, leaving the event to Him who knows whether the busy engagements of a public life will draw me nearer to, or separate me further from Him; and who also knows whether He chooses me as an instrument of good; and if He does, He will bring the means used to a successful issue."

Elections at this time presented very different scenes from what they now afford; and, very frequently, the voters were anxious to decide the matter, as Irish counsel used to decide their causes, by fighting it out. This was so much the case at Weymouth, that Mr. Buxton was obliged to entreat his friends to use moderation towards their opponents. "Beat them," said he, "in vigour, beat them in the generous exercise of high principle—beat them in disdain of corruption, and the display of pure integrity; but do not beat them with bludgeons."

Four days before the election terminated, he writes:—

"June 26. 1818.

"I am very nearly sick of the bustle, and my expectations of success are considerably diminished this morning: but this is only my own opinion. I am exceedingly popular with my party, except as to one point. We (that is, the party, for I have had nothing to do with it) have made some most bitter attacks upon Sir —— —— for his conduct in Spain. But when I heard from a private friend of his, that he was quite sunk and wretched, I expressed in my speech yesterday the disdain I felt at promoting my cause by slander, and said, that as he had been acquitted by a competent tribunal, he must be considered as innocent. The violence of my party could hardly bear this, and for the first time they gave some indications of disapprobation. I told them plainly that I would do what I considered an act of public justice, though it offended every friend I had in the town."

To Mrs. Buxton.

"June 29. 1818.

"The election is over. I am now going to the Hall to return thanks to my constituents. And so I am a member of Parlia-

ment. Well, I have not yet wished to decide the matter myself. My only feeling has been, if it is right, I trust it will take place; and if not, I equally trust it will be prevented. I wish you were here to see me chaired. The town is in an uproar. The bugle-horn is at this moment playing, and hundreds of persons are collected on the Esplanade. Everybody has blue ribbons. I hope the children at Hampstead wear them."

Mr. J. J. Gurney writes to him on this important point in his career:—

"Norwich, 7. mo. 8th, 1818.

"My dear Brother,—My congratulations come late, which has arisen from want of time, not of interest. I have seldom felt more interested in anything than in thy parliamentary views. Many years have passed over our heads since I first expressed my opinion to thee, that Parliament would be thy most useful and desirable field of action. My wishes are now accomplished; and, till the Parliament meets, I shall indulge myself freely in pleasing anticipations of thy usefulness and thy success. Not to flatter thee, thou hast some qualities which fit thee admirably well for this station. * * * Nor have I any fears of the effect of a public career upon thy own soul. It is undoubtedly true that so extended a field of action will require at thy hands increased watchfulness and *great fidelity;* but I am sure thy judgment is too sound, and thy heart too much alive to the dictates of plain truth, ever to allow thee to be puffed up for those things in which thou hast a stewardship indeed, but *no fee.*

'Not more than others thou deserv'st—
But God has given thee more.'

"Let the five talents become ten, and the ten, twenty, and let them be rendered up at last from hands pure and undefiled, to Him from whom they came!

"Nothing is more beautiful in the world of morals than the great man in talents, who is the little child in religion. * * * With regard to a political course I have only two things on my mind. I believe that one great object taken up upon safe, sound, and religious grounds, and pursued with unabating and unabatable vigour, is a much better thing for a man of talents, who is willing

to be of some service in the world, than many objects pursued without accuracy, without perseverance, and without effect. Thou wilt, of course, be considered by everybody as the representative of the prison cause. To that cause thou art pledged. But in itself it will not afford thee sufficient scope. I fully believe that thy chief aim cannot be directed to any object so worthy of all thy efforts as the amelioration of our Criminal Code. It is a glorious cause to take up. My monitions are, I dare say, very pragmatical; nevertheless, I shall add one more. Do not let thy independence of all party be the means of leading thee away from *sound Whiggism.* I may shortly express my opinion that there *is a great work going on in the world:* that the human mind, under the safeguard of *religious education,* is advancing to the shaking off of many of its trammels, and many of its prejudices; that society is at present in a state of much corruption, but that, if this work goes on, generation after generation will become more enlightened, more virtuous, and more happy; that *the liberty of truth* will prevail over every obstruction. I consider this progress of the human mind perfectly safe, as long as it takes its spring from the unchangeable and most reasonable principles of the Christian religion. I am sure that these principles must ever prevent, in those on whom they act, any steps towards wicked innovation and licentious change. But let us not admit any check to the progress of true light, whether moral, political, or religious; and let us take especial care to avoid *the spirit of Toryism;* I mean that spirit which bears the worst things with endless apathy, *because they are old;* and with which reason and even humanity are nothing, and the authority of creatures, as fallible as ourselves, everything."

To Mrs. Buxton.

"Hampstead, Dec. 6. 1818.

"* * * I have passed a remarkably comfortable Sunday; after breakfast I sat down to Law's Spirit of Prayer. I wonder why his writings are not more popular; there is about them a warmth and a liveliness of persuasion, combined with a force of reason, which makes them very attractive to me. We then went to Wheeler-street Chapel, where Mr. Pratt gave us one of his best sermons. I dare say any other person of the party

would have complained of their distractions if they had only been as attentive as I was; but compared with myself in general, I had my mind much fixed on the service, and was much struck with many things in the Prayer Book which I have read a thousand times without notice. S. Hoare and I stayed the sacrament, which I entered into more I think than I ever did before. When I returned to my seat, I went through a kind of service of prayer, which I by practice have formed; first for myself, that I may press forward towards the mark for the prize of the high calling of Christ, and that I may be enabled to count all things but loss in comparison; next that I may be led to useful objects — that I may be allowed to do something for the service of mankind; then, that my motives in this may be cleansed and purified, and that I may act as unto the Lord and not unto men. Next for protection and health, and the blessings of this life — that is, if they are to conduce to my good, for I am afraid to ask for anything absolutely. * * * The point, however, which has been all day most upon my mind is a desire that I may work for others in Christ; that is, that His Spirit may actuate me to do what good I can, that I may have the high privilege of being His servant, and that the performance of His will, and not the applause of man, may be the wages I seek. This verse has been very forcibly before my mind, — 'Never turn away thy face from any poor man, and then the Lord will never turn away his face from thee.'

"You will hardly believe that, at the beginning of the day, I had a kind of longing for Norwich Meeting. In the shape of religious service, a Friend's Meeting, with Joseph and Priscilla for teachers, is the most congenial to my mind, more so I think than anything else. * * * I saw Mr. Pratt after church, who is in high spirits, and says that a hundred Blacks in Africa are true Christians, and some of them are even missionaries."

"Dec. 9.

"I rode to Upton to breakfast this morning, since which I have been engaged in some important calculations. These, however, have been interrupted by a visit from the manager of the Friar's Mount School. He gives the most satisfactory account of the expenditure of the money I raised for them last year; two new schools have been established, and two, which were about to be given up, are revived. He has formed a plan by which six

thousand children, now uneducated, will be instructed. The money is all that is wanting, viz. 4500*l.*, and I think I shall try. You will suppose I am mad, but this is not the case. Certainly nothing of a charitable nature, in which I have ever been engaged, has given me so much satisfaction as these Sunday Schools; and I feel, I hope, some gratitude for the great favour of being allowed to be an instrument of good to some hundreds of children during the past year. I never think of these schools without pleasure. With dearest love to you and the children, and with a joyful heart at the expectation of meeting you and them,

"Yours,

"T. F. BUXTON."

It will be remembered that at the commencement of the year 1818 he had determined to carry out several plans for the benefit of the poor in Spitalfields, and for other purposes of a similar character. In a paper written on New Year's day, 1819, he enters very fully into the details of his exertions on each of the five tasks he had set himself, not one of which had been neglected. The first of them had been "to write a pamphlet on Prison Discipline," and after alluding to the unexpected success of his work on that subject, he adds,—

"It has excited a spirit of inquiry on the subject, which I trust will do much good. I only hope that what has benefited others has not injured *me*. I cannot render myself insensible to the applause it has received. In my heart, however, I know that it is no work of mine, but that the Lord has been pleased, in great mercy, to make me one of His instruments in this work. Lord, I entreat thee, in this and in all things, to purify my motives, and to enable me to act as unto thee, and not unto man. Oh! guard my heart from the delusions of vanity. Make me to know how frail and powerless I am in myself, and to cherish with gratitude, but with humility, the inestimable privilege of being in any way thy servant."

The paper closes with the following reflections upon the burden of responsibility which he had lately under-

taken. It is interesting to see in what spirit he entered that arena, on which he was for twenty years to fight the battle of the oppressed.

"Now that I am a member of Parliament, I feel earnest for the honest, diligent, and conscientious discharge of the duty I have undertaken. My prayer is for the guidance of God's Holy Spirit, that, free from views of gain or popularity,—that, careless of all things but fidelity to my trust, I may be enabled to do some good to my country, and something for mankind, especially in their most important concerns. I feel the responsibility of the situation, and its many temptations. On the other hand, I see the vast good which one individual may do. May God preserve me from the snares which may surround me; keep me from the power of personal motives, from interest or passion, or prejudice or ambition, and so enlarge my heart to feel the sorrows of the wretched, the miserable condition of the guilty and the ignorant, that I may 'never turn my face from any poor man;' and so enlighten my understanding, that I may be a capable and resolute champion, for those who want and deserve a friend."

Upon first taking his seat in Parliament, his attention was exclusively directed to the different forms of judicial punishment. In the beginning of 1819, he took part in two or three debates upon the subject of convict transport ships, the state of which was proved by Mr. Bennett and other members to be horrible in the last degree; still the reformation of prisons was the subject nearest to his heart.

To J. J. Gurney, Esq.

"Feb. 25. 1819.

"When I last spoke (on the state of convict ships) there was no cry of question, but, on the contrary, marked attention; but alas! most undeserved, for, like a blockhead, I rose, having nothing to say, without a moment's premeditation. This has mortified me, which proves that my motives are not purified from selfish desires of reputation; and that all my anxiety is,

not eagerness for the reform of prisons and the penal code, but, in truth, debased and alloyed by a desire for the reputation of T. F. B. I despise this vanity. On Monday next comes on the question of prisons; on Tuesday, the question of the penal code. On the latter I shall speak with my arguments and facts clearly before me. If I then fail, the failure is final — I may serve the cause as a labourer, but neither this, nor any other, as an advocate — and *we* must be satisfied. I endeavour to divest my mind of too much carefulness about the matter, persuaded that, whatever the event may be, that event is right both for me and for the cause."

On the 1st of March, Lord Castlereagh's motion for a committee to inquire into the state of Prison Discipline, was carried, and on the next evening a motion for a committee on the Criminal Laws was made by Sir James Mackintosh, and seconded by Mr. Buxton, whose speech met with success abundantly sufficient to dispel his fears of uselessness in the House of Commons.

He began by demonstrating that the capital Code then existing was not a part of, but an innovation on, the ancient Common law; that, indeed, the great part of these capital enactments had been made within the memory of man. "There are persons living," he said, "at whose birth the Criminal Code contained less than sixty capital offences, and who have seen that number quadrupled, — who have seen an act pass, making offences capital by the dozen and by the score; and, what is worse, bundling up together offences, trivial and atrocious,— some, nothing short of murder in malignity of intention, and others, nothing beyond a civil trespass, —I say, bundling together this ill-sorted and incongruous package, and stamping upon it 'death without benefit of clergy.'"

His speech, the chief merit of which lay in the lucid and logical arrangement of a large mass of facts, tended

to show that the law, by declaring that "certain crimes should be punished with death, had declared that they should not be punished at all. The bow had been bent, till it had snapped asunder. The acts which were intended to prevent evil had proved acts of indemnity and free pardon to the fraudulent and the thief, and acts of ruin and destruction to many a fair trader."

To J. J. Gurney, Esq.

"Brick Lane, March 4. 1819.

"Well, the effort is over. Last night came on the grand question. I spoke for nearly an hour. I was low and dispirited, and much tired (bodily) when I rose. I cannot say I pleased myself. I could not, at first, get that freedom of language which is so essential, but I rose with the cheers of the House, and contrived to give much of what was on my mind. Everybody seems to have taken a more favourable opinion of the speech than I did. The facts were irresistible; and, for fear of tiring my auditors, I confined myself principally to facts. You will see by the papers that we obtained a victory. As for myself, I hope I did force myself into something like indifference to my own success, provided the cause succeeded."

To the Rev. Francis Cunningham.

"March 4. 1819.

"I made a long speech yesterday, with which the House seemed very well satisfied. I am on both the committees, for prisons and penal law, and so shall have enough to do. I however rejoice that I am in the House, for it is well worth while to sacrifice money, time, pleasure, everything except eternity, to such important objects. I often think of your advice, and wish for more of it. Last night I was meditating upon speeches, compliments, &c., and this reflection rushed upon my mind: 'And what of all these, if I forsake this book, the Bible?' I am writing in a little room full of about twenty members, all talking, so excuse errors, and everything else."

At the close of the debate many of the most distinguished members of the House came up and introduced

themselves to him; Mr. S. Hoare sat under the gallery, watching, with delight, the success of his friend. "I am sure," said he afterwards, "if I had been received in the House as he was, I should not have recovered from the elevating effect of it for twenty years."

But the opinion of an impartial observer may be more valuable. Mr. W. Smith (M. P. for Norwich) writes to Mr. J. J. Gurney:—

"You will see the result of last night's debate by the papers. Buxton acquitted himself to universal satisfaction. The House is prepared to receive him with respect and kindness; and his sterling sense, his good language, and his earnest manner, fully keep up the prepossession in his favour, so that I recollect very few who have made their *début* with so much real advantage, and seem so likely to maintain the station thus early assumed."

If we have dwelt at some length upon the success of this early effort in Parliament, it has not been from any wish to give his speeches more credit than they deserved. Their eloquence was less remarkable than their force; they were deeply stamped with his own character, which, as Mr. Wilberforce once remarked, was that of "a man who could hew a statue out of a rock, but not cut faces upon cherry-stones."

His speeches were not sparkling or splendid; their end was utility; their ornaments, clearness, force, and earnest feeling. He was not one of those orators, described by Lord Bacon, "that hunt more after words than matter, and more after the choiceness of the phrase, the sweet falling of the clauses, and the varying and illustration of their works with tropes and figures, than after the weight of matter, worth of subject, or soundness of argument." He usually bestowed much care in preparation; not in embellishing the style, but in

bringing together supplies of facts, and marshalling them in one strong line of argument. Speaking, as he did, from the heart, and for the most part on subjects which appealed to the feelings as well as to the judgment, he sometimes rose into passages of impassioned declamation; occasionally there was a burst of indignation, and not unfrequently a touch of playful satire; but the usual character of his oratory was a lucid and powerful appeal to the reason of his audience.

In accordance with the motions on the 1st and 3rd of March, two select committees were appointed, in both of which Mr. Buxton was included. The one was to inquire into the feasibility of mitigating the Penal Code, of which he writes, March 11th, 1819:—

"I conjecture that no man on the committee goes so far as I go—namely, to the abolition of the punishment of death, except for murder; but all go a very great way, and if we merely make forgery, sheep and horse stealing, not capital, it is an annual saving of thirty lives, which is something, and satisfies me in devoting my time to the subject. I am confident that our opinions on prisons and Criminal law will ultimately prevail; in short, I am in high spirits on the whole matter."

The other committee was appointed to examine the state of jails throughout the kingdom; and here we may briefly state the final result of the exertions made for the improvement of Prison Discipline. The committee published its first report in 1820, and the government was thereby induced to bring in a bill for consolidating and amending the prison laws then in existence. This bill was referred for revision to a select committee, of which Mr. Buxton was a member.

"You will be delighted," he writes soon afterwards to a friend, "to hear that the Prison Bill is going on wonderfully well, beyond all expectation. I made a speech the first day, stating the principles on which I thought we ought to proceed,

and the committee have subsequently adopted almost all of them; so that I do believe that this part of the business of my life will be done effectually."

After much patient investigation, a bill was prepared by the committee, and immediately adopted by the two Houses of Parliament; and thus the English jails, instead of remaining "the nurseries and hotbeds of crime, the almost inevitable ruin of all who entered within their walls," have become, generally speaking, places where the improvement as well as the punishment of the criminal is attempted. Perfection, of course, is not yet attained; the new system has been of no avail in those prisons where exertions have not been used to enforce it; but no man can read the descriptions of the state of jails, from twenty-five to thirty years ago, and compare them with those of the present day, without being astonished at the extent of the evil and of the reform.

John Henry North, Esq., to T. Fowell Buxton, Esq.

"Dublin, April 14. 1819.

"During the whole of the last Circuit, which is just terminated, I was seized with an inexpressible longing to write you an interminable epistle, but the labours of Nisi Prius forbade, and, now that they are at an end, I have begun to think that, with the whole Criminal law upon your hands, your prisons, penitentiaries, and 'Colony of Antipodes,' you will be better pleased to receive a moderate letter than one of overgrown dimensions. I hope I need not tell you with what exceeding pleasure I read your admirable book, or how delighted I was with the praises that were everywhere bestowed upon it. It has done you infinite honour. The general language applied to it here is, that it is the most interesting book that has been published for many years. I had some satisfaction, too, in observing a few little traits by which the author discovered himself to me immediately. The zeal that your exertions have excited in this country, on the subject of prisons, is really sur-

prising. We have now a society in Dublin, for the improvement of prison discipline, of which I am an unworthy member. Here is a committee of ladies, who visit Bridewell in turns every day, and who have in a very short time effected considerable improvement, and their example has been followed in some of our country towns. At the last Galway Assizes, Judge Johnson, in his charge to the Grand Jury, recommended this plan, and alluded to your book and Mrs. Fry's exertions in terms of the highest approbation. It will gratify you to find that the seed which you have scattered has fallen upon good ground."

Mr. Buxton replies:—

To J. H. North, Esq.

"April 19. 1819.

"A report has reached me that you are likely to get a seat in Parliament. Is there a bit of truth in it? Is there the remotest probability of so joyful an event? Pray do not conceal it from me a moment, for I speak only truth when I say it would materially add to my happiness. I have plenty of acquaintance, but hardly a familiar friend in the House, and this is a very needful thing. I much want some one with whom I can freely communicate, and who would honestly tell me when I am right and when I am in error; and I need not tell you how fully my wishes would be satisfied if we were there together. Perhaps you will like to hear the impression the House makes upon me. I do not wonder that so many distinguished men have failed in it. The speaking required is of a very peculiar kind; the House loves *good sense and joking*, and nothing else; and the object of its utter aversion is that species of eloquence which may be called Philippian. There are not three men from whom a fine simile or sentiment would be tolerated; all attempts of the kind are punished with general laughter. An easy flow of sterling, forcible, plain sense is indispensable; and this, combined with great powers of sarcasm, gives Brougham his station. Canning is an exception to this rule. His reasoning is seldom above mediocrity; but then it is recommended by language so wonderfully happy, by a manner so exquisitely elegant, and by wit so clear, so pungent, and so unpremeditated that he contrives to beguile the House of its austerity. Tierney

has never exerted himself much in my hearing. Wilberforce has more native eloquence than any of them, but he takes no pains, and allows himself to wander from his subject; he holds a very high rank in the estimation of the House.

"And now let me tell you a secret; these great creatures turn out, when viewed closely, to be but men, and men with whom *you* need not fear competition. I again, therefore, say, 'Come among us,' and I shall be greatly deceived if you do not hold a foremost place.

"My line is distinctly drawn. I care but little about party politics. I vote as I like; sometimes pro, and sometimes con; but I feel the greatest interest on subjects such as the Slave Trade, the condition of the Poor, Prisons, and Criminal law: to these, I devote myself, and should be quite content never to give another vote upon a party question. I am upon the Jail and Criminal law committees, and devote three mornings in the week to one, and three to the other; so I am contented, and feel as little inclination, as ability, to engage in political contentions. My body is strong enough, but any stress upon my mind, just now, deranges me instantly. 'Indolent vacuity of thought' is my only remedy; but it is not a very convenient medicine for one who has such a multitude of engagements. How fares the law? Is Ireland blessed with abundant litigation, or does poverty deny this, the chief of luxuries?

"Never mind discouragements. If you live and labour, you must stand in the front of that society in which you may be placed, be it in the Dublin Courts or St. Stephen's. So I have always thought and said, and so I still think and say. I wish you were with us. I know you will be a Tory: you always were one in heart, and your wife will make you still worse: but we will contrive to agree together, for I am not a Whig. I am one of those amphibious nondescripts called Neutrals; but how can I be anything else? I cannot reconcile to myself the doctrine of going with a party right or wrong. I feel with you that my objects would prosper much better if I sat behind the Treasury Bench; but then I must often vote against my convictions; *i. e.*, do wrong that right may come; and I do not feel this to be my duty, even for prisons and Criminal law. Has Wyndham Quin's business made much noise in Ireland? It occupied about a week of our time, and the House were so

amused they would do nothing else. Smith's evidence was excellent, and true; for Gould's there are more appropriate phrases. Plunkett made a speech which did not please the House; it was special pleading, which they hate."

To Mrs. Buxton.

"Weymouth, Aug. 15. 1819.

* * * "I suppose M. has given you a full account of our travels. During the first ten miles I did not quite recover my composure, nor forget the horror I experienced at the rape of my apples. All the remainder of the journey was very pleasant. We read diligently, though with a few intervals for conversation. Our book was Lord Russell's Life. No wonder his friends admired him, and his wife adored him; he was the noblest of all the nobles I ever read of. His intrepidity and gaiety in the prospect of death are unrivalled. A man of the name of Rich, who packed the jury, and thus caused Lord Russell's condemnation, had formerly belonged to his party, and had deserted to the Court. He brought down the death-warrant to Newgate; when he was gone, Lord Russell said to Burnett, 'I felt a great mind to tell Rich (only it is indecent to joke in these matters) that he and I should never sit again together in the House of Commons to vote for the exclusion of the Duke of York.' Perhaps you will not much admire this anecdote, but it is quite charming to me: it shows a mind so entirely at ease.

"Here I am continually in the air, and certainly have already found the benefit of it. I rode this morning for two hours on the Wyke sands before breakfast. I have determined not to canvass, but to be constantly walking about: the worst of it is, I do not know above a third of their faces, and the names of about one in a hundred, so I am in momentary danger of grasping the hand, and inquiring with the kindest solicitude after the welfare of the wife and family of a man who never saw Weymouth before in his life. * * * Weymouth is a striking place in one respect; it brings me into contact with some whose course is nothing short of tremendous, and this trying question always recurs: 'You know better things; by mercy you have been led into other society, and the truth has been discovered to your judgment upon the comparison of this world and eternity;

then is your course as much superior to theirs as your light is—in short, with all the instruction and knowledge given you, are you seeking heaven with your whole heart?'"

In November the riot which had taken place at Manchester, and the severe measures to which the magistrates of that city had resorted, where brought before Parliament. Before the debate Mr. Buxton writes:—

To his Uncle, Charles Buxton, Esq., at Bellfield.

"Nov. 1819.

"I quite agree with you in reprobating the Radicals. I am persuaded that their object is the subversion of religion and the constitution, and I shall be happy to vote for any measure by which the exertions of their leaders may be suppressed, but I fear we shall much differ as to the nature of those measures. I most strongly condemn the conduct of the magistrates at Manchester, and I equally condemn the conduct of the ministers in giving them public thanks; and I think, in justice as well as in common prudence, that wretched affair ought to be strictly scrutinised, and it will be very awkward if it should turn out that these magistrates, having been thanked, deserved to be punished.

"You will believe that I did not pass over, without due attention, your remark—'I shall feel much disappointed and vexed if you do not exert yourself, and I am sure you will give great offence to most of your Weymouth friends.' I think you must know how sincerely sorry I should be to vex and disappoint you, and I am not indifferent to the good-will of my Weymouth friends; but it would be the most contemptible baseness in me, if I were to allow the fear of giving offence to operate on my conduct.

"When I entered Parliament, I determined to allow no personal consideration, of any description, to influence my votes; and on this occasion I do hope I shall not shrink from doing my duty, whatever may be the point to which that duty appears to lead.

"I go to London to-morrow, and I wish you could contrive to come there now. I doubt not we could manage to agree very well, in spite of Radicals and Ministers."

To J. J. Gurney, Esq.

"Nov. 25. 1819.

"I must give you a line to tell you how things have gone on in the House. We have had a wonderful debate; really it has raised my idea of the capacity and ingenuity of the human mind. All the leaders spoke, and almost all outdid themselves. But Burdett stands first; his speech was absolutely the finest, and the clearest, and the fairest display of masterly understanding that ever I heard; and with shame I ought to confess it, he did not utter a sentence to which I could not agree. Canning was second; if there be any difference between eloquence and sense, this was the difference between him and Burdett. He was exquisitely elegant, and kept the tide of reason and argument, irony, joke, invective, and declamation flowing, without abatement, for nearly three hours. Plunkett was third; he took hold of poor Mackintosh's argument, and griped it to death; ingenious, subtle, yet clear and bold, and putting with the most logical distinctness to the House the errors of his antagonist. Next came Brougham—and what do you think of a debate in which the fourth man could keep alive the attention of the House from three to five in the morning, after a twelve hours' debate? Now, what was the impression made on my mind, you will ask. First, I voted with ministers, because I cannot bring myself to subject the Manchester magistrates to a parliamentary inquiry; but nothing has shaken my convictions that the magistrates, ministers, and all, have done exceedingly wrong. I am clear I voted right; and, indeed, I never need have any doubts when I vote with ministers, the bias being on the other side. Did the debate inflame my ambition? Why, in one sense, it did. It convinced me that I have the opportunity of being a competitor on the greatest arena that ever existed; but it also taught me that success in such a theatre is only for those who will devote their lives to it. Perhaps you will admire the presumption which entertains even the possibility of success. I am, I believe, rather absurd; but I hold a doctrine to which I owe—not much, indeed, but all the little success I ever had,—viz., that with ordinary talents and extraordinary perseverance all things are attainable. And give me ten years in age, ten times my constitution, and oblivion of the truth which paralyses many an exertion of mine,

that 'vanity of vanities, all is vanity,' and especially that fame is so, — I say, give me these things, and I should not despair of parliamentary reputation; but to one who cannot bear fatigue of mind, who loves sporting better than glory, who will not enlist under the banners of party,—to such a being fame is absolutely forbidden. I am well content; I cannot expect the commodity for which I will not pay the price.

"So far I scribbled yesterday, and then I went to the levée. * * * The rooms were tolerably splendid; but, upon the whole, I never was less attracted by anything than courtiership, and would not be obliged to attend regularly for all the ribbons of all the colours of the rainbow. At dinner, afterwards, I had a great deal of conversation with the two Grants, Denman, and the Attorney-General, and then I went home with Wilberforce, and spent a most pleasant evening. His family prayers were nothing short of delightful. I hope I shall see him a good deal while I am in town.

"P.S. Bootle Wilbraham (who is a Lancaster magistrate) was defending his brethren in the debate, but did it in so low a tone of voice that nobody could hear him; somebody whispered about, that *he was reading the Riot Act.*"

The following letter was addressed to his sister, Mrs. Forster, whose husband was preparing to go to America, on what the Society of Friends term "a religious visit" to the members of their community.

"My dear Sister, "Earlham, 1819.

"Your letter has been much upon my mind, and has raised a variety of feelings. The first impression was one of much sorrow, that your plans and prospects of home happiness should be interrupted, and for so long a time; but I must confess, I have been speedily almost reconciled to it; that is, I have brought it home to my own mind, and have considered, whether it would not really be the greatest of blessings, if by any means my duty would call me to such a sacrifice, and the call were not to be disobeyed. After all, it is a noble thing—it is the noblest of all things—to be permitted to be a servant of the Infinite Ruler of the world; and how low and earthly is that wisdom which could prefer any delights before the delights of such self-dedication! We know

but few things for certain; but this is one of them; — a promise is given to him, who leaves father or mother, or wife or children, for Christ's sake. How can I mourn then, that William should accept the terms of such a promise? I rejoice that he is counted worthy to suffer for Christ's sake. I have always felt particularly interested with the vision of the man of Macedonia, calling Paul to come over and help him, comparing it with the Epistle to the Philippians. The discouragements at first were so great, and yet the Epistle describes such an abundant and happy produce. Who can tell how many may have eternal reason to rejoice at the obedience of the Apostle, and who can presume to limit the effect which Providence may please to produce by William's visit? We may differ on some points, but not on this — that his call is from above. I am persuaded it has been sought in the right spirit. I believe it is sent in mercy to others — in eminent mercy to him and to you! and I am willing that you should undergo the pains of separation. But, my dear Anna, you must not imagine I am indifferent about this. Let me ask, Have you determined to remain behind? I do not give an opinion upon the subject. All I wish to express is, that you must not stay from motives of economy. * * * Of course, we shall see you before his departure. I will hear of nothing else. With love to you both, and not without thankfulness that there is something of a missionary spirit among you,

"I am,

"Your affectionate brother,

"T. F. BUXTON."

CHAPTER VII.

1820, 1821.

ELECTION. — DOMESTIC AFFLICTIONS. — LETTERS. — CROMER HALL. — PRISCILLA GURNEY. — CORRESPONDENCE. — SPEECH ON CRIMINAL LAW.

At the commencement of the year 1820, Mr. Buxton thus enumerates the subjects which he hoped to accomplish in the course of the year — "First; to assist, to the best of my ability, in Parliament, to amend our Criminal Code; and, secondly, to amend our prisons. Thirdly; to obtain a return of the number of widows who burn themselves at their husbands' funeral in India, preparatory to a law prohibiting such enormities. Fourthly; to establish a fund for supporting the Sunday-schools (on the plan of that at Friar's Mount) in Spitalfields." He then mentions, that his thoughts had been principally engaged upon the Criminal Code, till incapacitated for study by an attack of illness, his health having been indifferent for some months previously.

"Now what a lesson is this," he says, "not to delay preparation for death till our death-beds; till our bodies, weakened and wasted, are unfit for every exertion!

"'Let us work while it is called to-day.' I have prayed for love to God, for faith in Christ, and for the spirit of prayer, constant and warm."

The death of the King, and the consequent prospect of a dissolution of Parliament, occasioned some anxious thoughts. "I have felt some doubt," he says, on the 6th of February, "whether I should stand;" and he

mentions his "eight children" among the reasons against doing so. He adds,

"Lord, guide my heart and will aright, and lead me to determine for the best. Oh that I could from this day offer myself a living sacrifice to the Lord, doing or abstaining, speaking or being silent, spending or forbearing to spend, simply because it was the will of God!

"Oh that I could thus put off the old man and put on the new man! I think the time that is past should suffice me to have wrought my own will; and for the future let me try all things by this standard, 'Is it the will of God?' Oh, gracious God, this is what I would be; but what am I? Is one hundredth part of my time, talents, money, strength, spent for God? No!"

He determined at length to stand again for Weymouth. He was successful, and after announcing his re-election he proceeds:—"I heartily hope I may make some good use of my present privilege, and that some of the oppressed may be less miserable in consequence." From Weymouth he went to Bradpole to see his brother-in-law, Mr. W. Forster, before his departure to America.

To Mrs. Buxton.

"March 11. 1820.

"I came here to-day, and have much enjoyed seeing them. William, however, is grave and low. Now I think he has no right to be low; he barters his present happiness for a price incontestably above its real value, and having made up his mind to change perishable for imperishable, and imperfect for perfect, he ought only to rejoice that he has been wise enough to make so good a bargain. However, the sacrifice is a noble one, for I think I never saw two people more possessing their hearts' content."

To J. J. Gurney, Esq.

"Bradpole, March 12. 1820.

"I have here a full opportunity of learning a lesson of humility. It is very well to do good and to serve one's country,

while at the same moment we are feeding our ambition and gratifying our pride; but what are the sacrifices I make? I may call them sacrifices, but their true name is, the pleasures I enjoy. Here, however, the pleasure and the sacrifice are totally at variance. How truly and exactly do the words, 'They left all and followed him,' convey my view of William's two years' absence from a home, a wife, a boy (not to mention the dear horse, and ducks, and flowers), the very darlings of his heart, all his wishes and desires centering in this spot! Well, I cannot pity him, I am more inclined to envy one who is wise enough to make a bargain so incontestably good. I went to Meeting with him twice to-day; his morning sermon on 'Trust in the Lord with all thine heart, and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths,' was one of the very best I ever heard. But the text is one particularly interesting to me. I return home on Wednesday, and mean to study hard till Parliament meets, having at this time the following subjects in my mind: — The Criminal law; The Prisons; The Police; Botany Bay; The Slave Trade; The Practice of burning Widows in India, by Authority of the English Resident; Lotteries; Colonisation, viz., Land for supporting Schools, and Emancipation of Slaves; The Prosecution of the Quarterly Review by order of the House, for Libels on America: — cum multis aliis.

"So you see, my dear brother, I am likely to be fully engaged —whether usefully or not is at his disposal, who disposes all things; but I am thankful that He has given me a desire (mixed indeed, and polluted, but still a desire) to serve my brother men.

"The race is not always to the swift, nor the battle to the strong; and there are some very few occasions in which labour fails; but labour unactuated by selfish considerations, and solely fixing its eye on the goal of duty, and steadfastly determined to reach it, is, I believe, never defeated.

> 'His way once clear, he forward shot outright,
> Not turned aside by danger or delight.'

"This spirit — high objects — and what is ten times better than either, a mind uninfected by vanity, no eye to self — these together will just accomplish every thing except impossibilities."

Thus far Mr. Buxton's career had been one of almost unchequered prosperity, — as a member of Parliament; as a man of business; as a husband; as the father of a large and promising family, his heart's desires had been fulfilled. His public undertakings were becoming daily more important and engrossing, and his home was a scene of unclouded happiness.

His valued friend, the Rev. Charles Simeon, thus writes to him from Cambridge: —

"My dear Friend, "Jan. 14. 1820.

"Certainly if I should live to visit your house again I shall do it with no little joy, for I do not expect to see in this world a brighter image of heaven than I was there privileged to behold. A sweet savour of love remained upon my spirit for a long time after, and I am not sure that it is quite evaporated yet. But I do not know that I shall not thrash you for supporting the Radicals. I look to you, under God, to be an instrument of great good in the House of Commons; and I would not that you should subvert the influence which your habits and talents are so calculated to command. * * * * * I am no politician; but I feel a regard for you, and seem to think that the more I know of you the more my heart will be knit to you: so you must bear with this impudent letter, from one who is with no common affection,

"Yours,

"CHARLES SIMEON."

But all this happiness was about to be marred by a rapid succession of calamities. Mr. Buxton had been hastily summoned back from the election, in consequence of the alarming illness of one of his children. His eldest son, a boy of ten years old, had been sent home from school unwell, but no suspicion of danger was at first excited; his disorder, however, proved to be inflammatory; and, in the course of a very few days, he sank under it. His father writes in his Journal—

"Thus have we lost our eldest son, the peculiar object of our anxious care; a boy of great life and animation; of a most beautiful countenance; of a most sweet disposition: and, blessed be God, we feel that in the whole event His mercy has been extended to us. We can rejoice and mourn together,—mourn at our loss, and rejoice that without exposure to the trials and temptations of the world it has pleased God to take him to himself. We feel the most certain assurance that he is with God; and we feel persuaded that, if we could but be permitted to see him as he now is, we should never bewail him for another instant. 'He pleased God, and was beloved of Him, therefore, being among sinners, he was translated; yea, he was speedily taken away, lest that wickedness should alter his understanding or deceit beguile his soul.' 'He is gone unto Mount Zion.' If these things be true, and true they most certainly are, can we repine, can we wish to recall him? For myself, my heart's desire and prayer has been, that this event may wean me from the world and fix my heart on God. * * * To-night I read Hopkins' most admirable sermon, 'Death disarmed of its sting.' O God, make me thy servant and soldier, was, and is, my prayer. * * * I went this morning and sat down on the top of the hill above my house; I then prayed for myself, my wife, each of my children, especially Edward, now my eldest son! and Harry; for my servants; for the heathen; for the sanctification of my pursuits; and God grant that my prayers are heard!"

His faith was destined to be more severely tried. The younger children, who were already suffering from the hooping-cough, were seized within a few days with the measles. He writes—

"April 9.

"This week has passed away in great anxiety for the remainder of my flock."

"Sunday night, April 16.

"How wonderful are the ways of the Lord; how sweet his mercies; how terrible his judgments! The week past has been one of the most acute anxiety. Oh! when one affliction flows in upon us after another, may they burst the bonds by which we are tied to earth, may they direct us heavenward, and may we,

having our treasures in heaven, have our hearts there also. * * * * * In myself how much is there of unholiness, of worldliness, of pride, of spiritual deadness! and, for myself, I would only now ask that the Lord would eradicate and extinguish these, at whatever cost, at whatever sacrifice. I have just been out walking, viewing this splendid starry night; what immeasurable mightiness does the firmament display! And when we consider that for all these innumerable worlds there is one Arbiter, one Sovereign Director, can we say aught else than 'Thy will be done? Cannot He who rules the universe decide what is best for the children he has lent me? May I yield to that will!"

The sacrifice was required from him, for in less than five weeks after the death of his son it pleased God also to take to himself the three infant daughters whose illness had excited such deep feeling. On the death of the eldest, a child of four years old, he writes: —

"'Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him.' I had much desired her life, but willingly do I resign her into the hands of the Lord, praying him that he would mercifully make her death the means of turning me more nearly to the Lord.

"Thus, in little more than a month," he adds, "have we lost the darlings and delights of our life; but they are in peace: and for ourselves, we know that this affliction may redound to our eternal benefit, if we receive it aright. * * * How are all our most choice and comely blossoms cut off; how naked do we appear, how stripped of our treasures! Oh, my God, my God! Be thou our consoler and comfort us, not with the joys of this world, but with faith, love, obedience, patience, and resignation."*

"Tunbridge Wells, May 14. 1820.

"We came here with the fragments of our family, on Wednesday last, in hopes that the retirement and peace of this place may recruit the strength of my beloved wife. May God give her every blessing; and, for myself, my prayer is that this trial may not pass away, but may leave a durable impression."

* "Eheu! Eheu!" was the simple epitaph he placed upon the tomb of his four children.

The diary from which this melancholy narrative has been drawn closes at this date; and of the summer, which was chiefly spent at Tunbridge Wells, there are few notices, except that before mentioned of the passing of the Prison Discipline Bill, and an allusion, on the 8th of June, to the Queen's proposed trial.

"Last night came on in the House the great events of the Queen, and I think I never spent an evening to so much advantage as this last. The case is this; we are going into an inquiry which will lay bare the most disgraceful scenes in the Royal family on both sides; the probable consequence will be, the impeachment of the Queen. The nation will be divided, and all the lower orders will be on her side: and the certain consequences, disturbances, riots, and bloodshed.

"These considerations pressed much on my mind, and I called Wilberforce out of the House, and persuaded him to move for a delay of two days, for the purpose of preventing the necessity for such painful and disgraceful disclosures, which motion I seconded in a short, warm, decided, and well-applauded speech; and the whole House were so much with us, that the Ministers were obliged to give way. I have been most warmly thanked by both sides. Brougham said, 'You may live fifty years, and do good every day, but you will never do as much as you have done this night.' In short, the effort succeeded beyond expectation, and I am glad that I was able to persuade Wilberforce to take so decisive a step. He wavered a good deal, but when he spoke, he spoke most beautifully, and at considerable length; his fine fancy played upon the subject."

In the autumn of 1820, Mr. Buxton, who was no longer obliged to give much attention to the Brewery, and greatly needed rest and change, gave up his house at Hampstead, and became a resident, permanently as it proved, in the neighbourhood of Cromer.

At first he resided at Cromer Hall, an old seat of the Wyndham family, which no longer exists; having many years ago been pulled down and replaced by a modern edifice.

It was situated about a quarter of a mile from the sea, but sheltered from the north winds by closely surrounding hills and woods; and, with its old buttresses and porches, its clustering jessamine, and its formal lawn, where the pheasants came down to feed, had a peculiar character of picturesque simplicity. The interior corresponded with its external appearance, and had little of the regularity of modern buildings; one attic chamber was walled up, with no entrance save through the window, and, at different times, large pits were discovered under the floor, or in the thickness of the walls, used, it was supposed, in old times by the smugglers of the coast.

Upon first settling at Cromer Hall he received under his roof Mrs. Buxton's youngest sister, Priscilla Gurney, who was then in an advanced stage of consumption, under which she sank in March, 1821.

This lady was a minister in the Society of Friends, like her sister Mrs. Fry, whom she greatly resembled, in uniting uncommon resolution and originality of character with the most winning gentleness of demeanour. Mr. Buxton had the highest opinion of her judgment and piety; and she exercised, as we shall see, a peculiar influence upon his subsequent career. He thus describes her:—

"* * * I never knew an individual who was less one of the multitude than Priscilla Gurney. In her person, her manners, her views, there was nothing which was not the very reverse of commonplace. There was an air of peace about her, which was irresistible in reducing all with whom she conversed under her gentle influence. This was the effect on strangers; and in no degree was it abated by the closest intimacy: something there was, undoubtedly, in the beauty of her countenance, and in the extreme delicacy which constituted that beauty; in a complexion perfectly clear; in the simplicity and absence of all

From a Sketch by Priscilla Gurney.

CROMER HALL.
1820.

decoration but that of the most refined neatness, which, altogether, conveyed to every one's mind the strongest conception of purity. And these attractions of person were aided by manners which nicely corresponded. * * * No less remarkable were the powers of her mind. I have seldom known a person of such sterling ability; and it is impossible to mention these mental powers without adverting to that great, and in my estimation, that astonishing display of them, which was afforded by her ministry. I have listened to many eminent preachers, and many speakers also, but I deem her as perfect a speaker as I ever heard. The tone of her voice, her beauty, the singular clearness of her conception, and, above all, her own strong conviction that she was urging the truth, and truth of the utmost importance—the whole constituted a species of ministry which no one could hear, and which I am persuaded no one ever did hear, without a deep impression."

Whilst attending from time to time his duties in London, he thus writes to Mrs. Buxton, who had remained at Cromer Hall to nurse her sister: —

"Dec. 5. 1820.

"I am going to dine at St. Mildred's Court,* and, at 11 o'clock, two persons connected with the police come to me, and we go together through all the receptacles of rogues in the east end of the town. It will occupy about the whole of the night, but I think it right to do so. I never was more called into action than this time of being in town, so many objects of great good and importance offer themselves. To-day I have been much interested by the African Institution."

"London, Jan. 13. 1821.

"I wrote a line yesterday just to mention my safe arrival, and to-day I have hardly time for more, for a flood of business has overtaken me. I have an engagement already for every day this week, and next week I shall have to bring forward a motion in the House, which will require some time and thought; but it is the weight and multitude of business which makes me happy. At Earlham I read a piece of Paley's philosophy, which I found admirable. I was quite delighted with the vigour of thought

* With Mr. Fry.

which runs through it, and it gave me a train of thought which lasted almost to Ipswich. * * * I have felt very much leaving you all; but though I should enjoy being with you, I could stay no longer from Parliament with an easy mind, so we must be satisfied."

"Bellfield, Jan. 17. 1821.

"I arrived here safely yesterday, but with an adventure on the road. Just on this side of Andover, about 5 o'clock in the morning, my sweet slumbers were impaired by the coach suddenly coming over with a most noble crash. I directly perceived that I was unhurt, and my first feeling was one of thankfulness. As I was not injured, so I did not feel in the slightest degree hurried or disturbed, though rather anxious lest my books and apples should be lost through the prostrate window; so I first collected these, then I put on my spectacles, then exchanged my cap for my hat, and then ascended through the broken window and got upon the body of the coach, where I immediately delivered a lecture to the coachman on the impropriety of swearing at any time, but especially at the moment of deliverance from danger. We then went in various directions for help, with which, in about an hour and a half, we contrived to place the machine on its legs. My thoughts in the course of the journey had been dwelling on Providence a great deal; and, at the same time, I had been looking forward to future and distant plans, and had been strongly impressed with the recollection that all these might be baffled by the fracture of a linch-pin, or by any other slight cause, under the guidance of Him who rules the minute as well as the great events of life, and had had the text, 'Thou fool, this night,' &c., in my mind.

"I find my constituents in very good humour, but my coming was quite indispensable."

"Palace Yard, Sunday Jan. 25.

"I slept last night at Hampstead, and came this morning to Wheeler-street Chapel, where the service was very unusually affecting and interesting to me. My mind has been dwelling, or rather it has been fixed, on the love and mercy of God. I look upon myself as so signal an instance of his extreme mercy. As for my course of life, in that I have no pleasure and no confidence; I feel that I am halting between two opinions, that my heart is not His, who said, 'Give me thine heart:' that

there is a certain lukewarmness in things spiritual which forms no part of my character in things of much less importance: in a word, I seem to be 'stopping short' of that full dedication of self, which is, not a part, not merely an essential, but the very substance of the Christian character. I see before me a path far nobler than the one which I am treading. I could be an effectual servant of the Lord, directing the talents which he has placed at my disposal to his service (when I say talents, I mean not intellectual talents so much as circumstances, fortune, influence, &c.); and being not in some small degree, as is the case, nor almost, but altogether set upon serving God and man. Well! this is the mercy, that, negligent as I have been, yet He has still permitted me this day to draw near to Him in prayer. He has not rejected me altogether: He has this day permitted me to taste and know how good and how gracious He is; and the difference between the implacability of my own heart and the plenteous forgiveness which is with God, has powerfully exercised my mind.

"I think I never so much longed for you, but every time I do so I rejoice to think I have given you to my darling Priscilla. Do not think I repine at our separation. I am most thoroughly satisfied, and enjoy giving her anything I prize so highly. What a pleasure and a blessing has her visit to us this last autumn been! 'giving thanks always in every remembrance of her' is exactly my feeling. She must not fancy I pity her: I can most truly say I would this moment joyfully exchange situations with her, except that I should not like to cheat her into a bad bargain.

"Then as to——*, what do you think I have felt about her after all my complaints? only unmixed admiration for the good she did in spite of me. I say unmixed approbation of her zealous, unwearied, effectual services. I always strive at one thing, and that is to look at the truth. Passion, prejudice, temper, and twenty other weeds of the earth may have absolute occupancy and direction of my actions, but they shall not, if I can help it, pervert my judgment; and to my judgment her activity and effectuality have been admirable. Still, I think it ought to be a matter most seriously weighed by her, whether it would not be better to execute her objects more mildly, even

* A guest who had lately been staying at Cromer Hall.

at the expense of executing much less. The most attractive of all things is female gentleness, and besides it is the most influential of all things. It has a power which nothing else has upon the ruder bosoms of the lords of the creation. —— does not know how much we require to be soothed and petted and coaxed, and how we are to be led by a thread, when a cart-rope will not drag us. In short, she must not be vehemently good, nor give to feebler brethren like myself a distaste for things which are excellent by her excessive ardour in the pursuit. From every good action there ought to be a double fruit, good to the object in contemplation, and good to the bystanders by example. Now it is very odd I should have run on thus, for I can truly say I have, since we parted, repeatedly scolded and upbraided myself, and only commended her. But I hope your giving her some of these hints, and reading her Pascal on the Art of Persuading (where he shows that, for one man who is subdued by force, ten are allured by 'des agrémens'), may be of use; and so my very kind love to her."

"Hampstead, Jan. 27.

"I have had my hands brimfull of business this last week, but it has not fatigued me as parliamentary business does; there is no stress on the mind, no anxiety, no apprehension that a good cause may suffer by my inattention or incapacity, which is wearisome in Parliament. We had a pleasant dinner party at the Duke of Gloucester's yesterday. I had spent the morning with Wilberforce, who was quite delightful. I begin to think, that of all men he is the most subjected and controlled, and invariably in the right frame of temper. I say 'begin' because he is beginning to share the seat in my mind which Joseph has so long occupied. * * * I shall finish my examination of the boys when I am at Cromer, so let Miss —— tremble. Tell her from me, that I look with unmixed satisfaction to her superintendence of their education; and I am sure, if she give them vigour of mind—'a mind not to be changed,' a determination to accomplish their object by dint of resolution, and an unconquerable fixed will to succeed, she will give them what is worth more than wealth, or rank, or anything else, except one thing, which if they have not, I trust they never will have this energy, because this energy is a great instrument, and, if ill employed, a great instrument of evil."

To one of his little boys.

"Jan. 28.

"I have had a fine gallop this morning on your capital horse 'Radical.' I ride him and Abraham every day, and always as fast as they can go, because I have so much to do that I cannot behave like little Lord Linger. I hope that when you are a man you will be very industrious and do all the good you can. There are a great many poor people who are very sick, and yet have no money to buy food, or clothes, or physic; and there are many more so ignorant that they never heard of the Bible, and think they do very right when they roast and eat their enemies! If you think this is very right, and that it is kind to stick a man on a spit and dress him like a pig, why, don't try to prevent it! But if you think it very wrong, then be sure you do all you can to stop it. Do you know, one good industrious man may do a great deal; and, if you wish to be of that sort, you must begin by being diligent now. But there is a much more important thing than even being diligent, that is being good. I don't much like to bring you a horn, because I am sure you will disturb the hen-pheasants, and so we shall have no young ones."

Mr. Buxton belonged, it has been said above, to the African Institution, the Society set on foot by Mr. Wilberforce and his coadjutors, in order to watch over the law, which with so much difficulty had been obtained in 1807, abolishing the Trade in Slaves between Africa and our Colonies. Having in a great measure effected this purpose, and secured the ostensible acquiescence of France, Portugal, and other nations, in the same measure, the Institution had at length sunk into a state of comparative inactivity.

To Mrs. Buxton.

"Jan. 30.

"I had engaged to go down to Coggeshall yesterday, shoot there to-day, and return to-morrow night; happily, as I think, I got notice of the meeting of the African Institution for to-day, so I put off my shooting excursion. In the course of the

meeting an opportunity occurred, which I could not pass over, of declaring my mind, as to the inactivity and ineffectiveness of the Society. I told them that it was certain we once had the confidence of the country; and it was now certain the public knew little and cared little on the subject. I have often spoken plainly and been condemned by others; a few times I have done so and blamed myself, but in this instance I really felt, and still feel, exceedingly grateful that I did not shrink from the duty. My remonstrance was well received, and a meeting was appointed for Saturday next, at Lord Lansdowne's, of all the members of both Houses interested in the subject, and perhaps it may be a means of great good. I tell all this long story for my dear Priscilla, who exhorted me not to neglect this, the first and most melancholy of all subjects. I thoroughly enjoyed the dear boys' letters, but I can't think that I shall find they know so much as they talk about when I get home. My hands are rather full: Thursday, the Brewery. Friday, Cape of Good Hope Slave Trade. Saturday, Lord Lansdowne's. Monday, Prison Bill. Tuesday, Brougham's Bill on Education. Wednesday, I made a speech to the children in Spitalfields. Thursday, Brewery and Mail Coach. Friday, home! I want two heads, two bodies, and the power of being in two places at once."

"Feb. 3.

"I was quite astonished at Wilberforce yesterday. I had not seen him since my vehement reprobation of the African Institution. Yesterday he was warm to excess; over and over again he thanked me for the boldness and openness of my remarks, and said they had penetrated deeply into his heart."

"March 8.

"I really do earnestly desire to write to you more fully, and to express how much my heart is yours and with you, but how can I? I left the House last night at one o'clock, very hot, and could not get to sleep: up this morning and full gallop to Hampstead; then to the Brewery on important business: then a gallop to a meeting of Daniel Wilson's society for the education of young clergymen, where, among the rest, I saw John and Francis Cunningham; I was quite pleased to see them again. The meeting was highly interesting, and the society seems doing so much good, that I am not sure but I shall to-morrow send

them a large donation. I did not to-day, for I am not fond of doing such things under the impulse of feeling.

"I afterwards saw R., who appeared to me to be doing her duty to her father; and, in my estimation, besides the duty to her father, the habit of doing it, and the credit of doing it, are of the highest importance to her.

"Poor dear Priscilla, how sorry I am that she should have any pain! but she is near the land where neither sorrow nor pain enters, and might with much more reason pity us than receive pity from us. Wilberforce was charmed with her message."

"March 12.

"John and Francis Cunningham came and dined at my lodgings, and we had a very pleasant evening. I almost determined to go over to Harrow yesterday, as John has a lecture for me on the neglect of private prayer. Alas! there is more truth in the charge than he knows, and since I heard his notions as to myself the subject has been much on my mind."

"March 15.

"Wilberforce dined with me on Tuesday last, and was quite delightful.—He gave us a long account of his early life and friends, and said one thing which has much stuck by me. I asked him who was the greatest man he ever knew? He said, 'Out of all comparison, Pitt! but,' he added, 'I never think of his superiority without reflecting, that he who is least in the kingdom of God is greater than he.' Now I see clearly that in this world I shall never be anything but a mere moderate—'behind the foremost, and before the last.' But for this I really do not care. I am, however, thoroughly discontented with my progress in better things, and wonder at myself whenever I reflect on them at all. Did Francis tell you of the lecture designed for me at Harrow? I must and will have it, for I am much inclined to think that my lower state in such matters arises from my neglect of spirituality, and of the appointed method of attaining it. I am in a sad scrape at Weymouth. They are going to have races, 'to the great benefit of the town and amusement of the company—fully calculate on my subscription and William's.' He wrote, acceding, but I have refused, for I feel a scruple against them. My dearest love to you all. Let the boys tell me what I am to buy them as presents."

His sister-in-law's illness was now rapidly increasing. He writes —

"London, March 20.

"As for dearest Priscilla, I neither grieve for the bad account of yesterday, nor rejoice at the more favourable one of to-day. I feel her given to the Lord, and I am sure that He is about her bed, and that He loves her, and that whatsoever shall happen to her will be sent in peculiar tenderness; and in these certain truths I commit her to Him without fear or repining. She is inexpressibly dear to my inmost soul, but I look upon her as a saint already in the hands of the Lord. * * * * I have tried to pray for her, but I cannot. My prayers turn into praises, and my mourning into joy. And, after all, if we lose her, what is it? Let our thoughts range through eternity, dropping only the trifle of the next fifty years, and what can we desire beyond her present state? We are sure that her God whom she served in her strength, protects, cherishes and will guard her from evil in her sickness. If she is destined to dwell in His presence for evermore, will not this satisfy those who love her dearly? I say again, I am satisfied and joyful in her state, and can with unbounded and satisfied confidence commit her to the Lord, and shall be almost glad if you tell her I send no message of hope or fear, neither can I hope or fear."

"March 22.

"On receiving your letter, the first impulse was to set off directly, but a meeting about the Slave Trade to-morrow morning, and a debate about the Slave Trade to-morrow evening; a meeting with Stephen on the same subject on Wednesday; and that of the Sunday School children on Wednesday evening, are reasons which seem to supersede every inclination. On the other hand, I ardently long to see my beloved Priscilla again, and the recollection, that she desired you to tell me that she had something to say to me, weighs in the strongest manner upon me. I would not, on any account, lose whatever this may be, whether of love, or advice, or reproof. Circumstanced, however, as I am, I have determined to wait, at least till to-morrow's account comes."

He soon after left London, and reached Cromer Hall

in time to receive those dying injunctions which his sister-in-law had been so anxious to lay upon him. What these were we shall see hereafter. After her death* he was compelled to return almost immediately to London. He writes thence: —

"I was quite out of heart all yesterday, and could neither speak at the public meeting, nor study at night. However, I was determined not to yield to low spirits, and, by dint of obstinacy, I at length did get to work, and continued till one o'clock in the morning."

A few days later he speaks of "working very, very hard." In addition to the questions of Prison Discipline, Criminal Law, and the Slave Trade, in which he took so much interest, his attention had been drawn, chiefly through the facts laid before him by the Rev. Mr. Peggs, a Baptist missionary just returned from India, to the subject of Suttee, viz. the self-immolation of Hindoo widows. Having collected a large mass of information, he determined to bring it before Parliament; and, in the course of the session, he made two motions on the subject. In his speech on the second occasion he proved that within the last four years, in the Residency of Fort William alone, 2366 widows had been committed to the flames! — that the French, Dutch, and other powers in India had abolished the custom in their territories, while the stigma of its continuance still rested on the British Government; and he showed that, so far from being voluntary, this cruel martyrdom was generally forced upon the unhappy widow, either by superstitious priests or interested relations.

* A letter of Mr. Simeon's on this occasion will be found in page 551. of his Memoir.

Several years, however, elapsed before anything of importance was accomplished in this matter, the question being one which fell within the province of the India House, rather than of the House of Commons.

The Committee which had been appointed in the preceding year to inquire into the working of the Criminal laws had now closed its labours, and Sir James Mackintosh's bill for the abrogation of the punishment of death in cases of forgery, arose from its report. A speech of Mr. Buxton's upon this bill* excited great notice at the time; the drift of it was, to prove that the law, as it stood, was at once inhuman and ineffective: that the severity of the punishment induced judges and jurors to strive for an acquittal: and that the uncertainty of the greater penalty was therefore more readily incurred than the certainty of the lesser one.

"We have gone on long enough," said Mr. Buxton, "taking it for granted that capital punishment does restrain crime, and the time is now arrived in which we may fairly ask, Does it do so?

"It has been tried long enough—we have tried nothing else for the last century. And on a scale large enough—the law England has displayed no unnecessary nicety in apportioning the punishment of death: kill your father, or a rabbit in a warren, the penalty is the same! Destroy three kingdoms, or a hopbine, the penalty is the same! Meet a gipsy on the high road, keep company with him, or kill him, the penalty by law is the same!

"The system, then, having been tried long enough, and largely enough, what are the results? Has your law done that which you expected from your law? Has crime decreased? Has it remained stationary? Certainly not. Has it increased? It certainly has, and at a prodigious rate.† Why, then, your system has failed!"

* May 23. 1821.

† In twelve years crime had increased fourfold.

Only one experimental fact had been brought forward on the other side. In the case of larceny from the person, mitigation had been tried; and the convictions for that crime had increased. But then every other crime had increased in an equal or greater ratio. That is to say, no more had been gained by inflicting capital punishments than by not inflicting them.

"We have done as well without as with the capital punishment. That is, our case is proved. To inflict death needlessly can be called by no other name than that of legal murder.

"Now, at the same period, two experiments were tried. In the one case, we proceeded from lenity to rigour; in the other, from rigour to lenity. Here, then, principle is opposed to principle, system to system, and the result is before us. First, in 1807, forgery of stamps was made a capital crime. And the question is, with what effect?

"By the confession of the solicitor of the Excise the crime has not abated, but the prosecutions have abated to one-half. The Excise was better protected by your former lenity than by your late rigour.

"But another experiment was tried, very different in its nature, and (I rejoice to say) as different in its effects. In 1811 the linen-bleachers came to Parliament * * * praying for a mitigation in the law against stealing from bleaching grounds. That prayer was conceded; in this House cheerfully. In another place acquiescence was granted somewhat in the same spirit in which the satirist describes the deities of old as yielding to the foolish importunities of their votaries.

> 'Evertêre domos totas, optantibus ipsis
> Dî faciles.'

And here it was determined to punish these romantic petitioners with the fulfilment of their prayer, and to inflict upon them the penalty of conceded wishes.

"With what effect? * * * To answer this question, I will enter," he says, "into a comparison of which no man will deny the fairness. I will take the last five years during which the crime was capital — and the last five years during which it has

not been capital. Now, if I prove that this offence has increased, but only in the same proportion with other offences, I prove my point for reasons which I have already assigned. But if I go a step farther, and prove that, while all other offences have increased with the most melancholy rapidity, this, and this alone, has decreased as rapidly, that there is one only exception to the universal augmentation of crime, and that one exception is in the case in which you have reduced the penalty of your law; if I can do this, and upon evidence which cannot be shaken, have I not a right to call upon the noble lord opposite, and upon His Majesty's ministers, either to invalidate my facts or to admit my conclusion?"

He then read the official returns of crimes committed in the duchy of Lancaster, whence it appeared that, before the mitigation of the law, this offence had been as rife as the other capital offences; but, since that mitigation, all the capital offences had increased prodigiously*, while this offence had *decreased two-thirds.*

"No man," he continued, "would justify severity for the sake of severity itself, or would love executions in the abstract. We have dispensed with them in one case, and the consequence is, fewer crimes, — greater security to property. Shall we stop there?"

He then adverted to the punishment of forgery: —

"For a multitude of years," he said, "every wretch who was overtaken by the law, without regard to age, or sex, or circumstances in extenuation, was consigned to the hangman. You accomplished your object, no doubt! By dint of such hardness you exterminated the offence as well as the offenders; forgeries of course ceased in a country under such a terrible method of repressing them! No! but they grew, they multiplied, they increased to so enormous an extent — victim so followed victim, or rather one band of victims was so ready to follow another — that you were absolutely compelled to mitigate your law, because

* For instance, stealing from dwelling-houses was a capital offence: it had increased *eleven-fold.*

of the multitude of the offenders,—because public feeling and the feeling of the advisers of the crown rebelled against such continual slaughter.

"Have I not then a right to cast myself upon the House, and to implore them no longer to continue so desperate and so unsuccessful a system; and to lay side by side the two cases—forgery and stealing from bleaching grounds,—both offences only against property—both unattended with violence? In the one we have tried a mitigation of the law, and have succeeded beyond our most sanguine expectations; in the other we have tried severity to the utmost extent—and to the utmost extent it has failed. Well then: are we not bound—I will not say by our feelings or by tenderness for life—but by every principle of reason and equity, of common sense and common justice, to discontinue a system which has so utterly failed, and to embrace a system which has been so eminently successful?"

Such were the results of the experiments made in our own time and country. He furnished others from history. Henry VIII. hanged 72,000 persons for robbery alone; yet Sir Thomas More wonders that "while so many thieves were daily hanged, so many still remained in the country, robbing in all places."

Queen Elizabeth hanged more than 500 criminals a year; yet complained bitterly that the people would not carry out her laws, and was obliged to appoint stipendiary magistrates to inflict these penalties. We find from Strype that the people would not prosecute and the magistrates would not act.

So ill, in these two cases, had the rigorous system succeeded.

He then noticed the happy effects resulting from the relaxation of penalties by King Alfred; and in modern times by the Duke of Tuscany and by the United States of America, and he concluded his observations upon this part of the subject with this remark:—

"Crime has increased in England as compared with every other

country—as compared with itself at different periods. Now what species of crime has increased? Precisely those lesser felonies which are capital now, but were not formerly—which are capital in England, but in no other country!"

He had next to remove a common but false impression that the Criminal Code was part of the Common Law.

He first made quotations from the codes of the Saxons, Danes, and Normans, which were palpably at variance with the spirit of our Penal Code. They were as tender of human life as the Code was reckless in destroying it. He proved this also from Coke, Blackstone, and Spelman.

"It is a fact," said he, "that six hundred men were condemned to death last year, upon statutes passed within the last century."

After showing the hurried and careless manner in which bills for inflicting death without benefit of clergy had continually passed the House, without debate or discussion, he stated his affection and reverence for the English Common Law, and the unwillingness he would have felt to attack it, and therefore claimed "a right to gather confidence and encouragement from finding a friend and advocate in that pre-eminent authority." He continues,

"There is no country in which public co-operation is not important to the execution of the law; but in England this concurrence between the people and the law is absolutely indispensable. It is taken for granted, that he who can, will inform—that the person aggrieved will prosecute. All this is taken for granted, and was justly so taken, as long as public feeling went along with the law; but now a man's life is at issue, and this at once seals the lips of the man who could inform, pacifies the prosecutor, silences the witness, and sometimes even sharpens the merciful astuteness of the judge. In fact and in truth it effects the deliverance of the felon.

"But worse than this, there is a price which we have to pay, of which, if I can prove the existence and extent, no man will deny that in itself it more than countervails every conceivable advantage, — I mean the perjury of jurymen."

After giving a number of instances where juries had clearly perjured themselves in order to save the lives of prisoners,—

"I hold in my hand," he says, "1200 cases of a similar description. Is it then policy or prudence — I say nothing of its wickedness — to tamper with what is so very delicate, or even to permit the reputation of that oath to be impaired, or any stain to be cast upon its purity? But when the public see twelve respectable men, in open court, in the face of day, in the presence of a judge, calling God to witness that they will give their verdict according to the evidence, and then declaring their belief in things, not merely very strange or uncommon, but actual physical impossibilities, absolute miracles, wilder than the wildest legends of monkish superstition, — what impression on the public mind must be made, if not this — that there are occasions in which it is not only lawful, but commendable, to ask God to witness palpable and egregious falsehood?"

Referring to the evidence which had been given by a multitude of persons in very different situations, of very different habits and opinions, as to the pernicious effects of the system of severe punishment upon all classes of society,—

"I ask," he said, "how happens it that persons so various — filling situations so various — merchants, bankers, solicitors of the Excise, shop-keepers, solicitors of the Old Bailey, officers of the police, clerks of the police offices, magistrates, and jurymen — men bound together by no similarity of pursuit, no identity of interest, — by no party feeling, political or religious, — how happens it, I ask, that such persons should

> 'Weave such agreeing truths, or how, or why,
> Should all conspire to cheat us with a lie?'

* * * Shall we accede to this rational solution of the uniformity of their testimony? Shall we not rather conclude that

they all spoke alike because they all spoke the truth, and that the uniformity of the evidence arose from the uniformity of the observation?

"And this opinion of practical men being corroborated by the opinions of men of profound thought and great learning — of Chillingworth, Johnson, Franklin, Pitt, Fox; of More, Bacon, Coke, Clarendon, Ashburton, and Blackstone; I say, when I see that the conclusion at which the wisest men have arrived by dint of reason is the same conclusion at which the most practical men have arrived by dint of experience; and that this, the speculation of the learned, and the observation of those that gather up their notions from the busy scenes of life, has been put to the test in America and in Tuscany, and that there it has realised more than the most sanguine expectation; — and further, that this system is the Common Law of England, and is common sense: — I say, when I have such a body of evidence and argument—of fact and authority—of reason and experience, — and when our adversaries, members of a committee which sat for many months, never once ventured to hint at an authority, or to produce a witness who could gainsay the truth of those doctrines which I am maintaining; — when I have so much in my favour, and so very little against me, I cannot but indulge the hope that the noble lord opposite and the Government will do justice to the country by aiding the milder but more efficient doctrines of penal legislation which we have endeavoured to promulgate."

He concluded his speech thus: —

"My argument then is this. Our system is before us. The price we pay for our system is, — the loss of public opinion, and the aid (the best, the cheapest, and the most constitutional) which the law gathers from the concurrence of public opinion; the necessity of doing that by spies, informers, and blood-money, which were better done without them; the annual liberation of multitudes of criminals; the annual perpetration of multitudes of crimes, perjury, and the utter abandonment of the first of your duties, the first of your interests, and the greatest of all charities — the prevention of crime. This is what you pay. And for what? For a system which has against it a multitude of divines, moralists, statesmen, lawyers, — an unrivalled phalanx

of the wise and good; a system which has against it the still stronger authority of practical men, who draw their conclusions from real life; a system which has against it the still stronger authority of the Common Law of England; which, if wrong now, is wrong for the first time; a system which has against it the still stronger authority of experience and experiment, in England on the one hand — in Tuscany, in America, and elsewhere, on the other: and, finally, a system which, in its spirit and its temper, is against the temper and the spirit of that mild and merciful religion 'which desireth not the death of a sinner, but rather that he should turn from his wickedness and live!'"

Numerous were the expressions of approbation which this speech called forth. Sir James Mackintosh said in the House, that it was "the most powerful appeal that he had ever had the good fortune to hear within the walls of Parliament."* And in a subsequent debate Mr. (now Lord) Denman remarked, that "more of wisdom, more of benevolence, more of practical demonstration he had never heard in the course of his parliamentary career, than was contained in the energetic speech of his honourable friend."

When, however, the division took place on the question, "That the bill for the mitigation of the punishment of death for forgery do pass," the Ayes were 115, and the Noes 121: and the bill was consequently lost!

On the 5th of June, 1822, Sir James Mackintosh again brought forward the question, and was again seconded by Mr. Buxton. They succeeded in carrying by a majority of sixteen the motion, "That the House will in the next session consider the means of increasing the efficacy of the Criminal Law, by abating the rigour of its punishments."

In 1823, however, the resolutions proposed by Sir

* Hansard, May, 1821.

James Mackintosh were rejected, and he and his friends were still struggling against a superior force, when in 1826, Mr. Peel, on his accession to office, undertook the momentous task of remodelling the whole penal code.

An account will be given, in its proper place, of the final result of the movement for the mitigation of that sanguinary code, by which, at the period when first Sir Samuel Romilly, and afterwards Sir James Mackintosh and Mr. Buxton brought the subject forward, two hundred and thirty offences were punishable with death!

CHAPTER VIII.

SLAVERY. 1821—1823.

MR. BUXTON IS CHOSEN BY MR. WILBERFORCE AS HIS PARLIAMENTARY SUCCESSOR. — COMMON CONFUSION OF "SLAVERY" WITH "SLAVE TRADE." — PREVIOUS IMPRESSIONS ON MR. BUXTON'S MIND. — PRISCILLA GURNEY'S DYING WORDS. — HE STUDIES THE SUBJECT. — LONG DELIBERATIONS. — FEAR OF SERVILE REVOLT. — UNDERTAKES TO ADVOCATE THE QUESTION. — LETTERS FROM MR. WILBERFORCE. — REFLECTIONS. — SUTTEE. — THE QUAKER'S PETITION. —LETTER TO EARL BATHURST.—THE FIRST DEBATE ON SLAVERY. —MR. CANNING'S AMENDMENTS.— AMELIORATIONS IN THE SLAVE'S CONDITION RECOMMENDED TO THE COLONISTS. — LETTER TO SIR JAMES MACKINTOSH.

THE evening after Mr. Buxton had delivered his speech on Criminal Law he received the following letter from Mr. Wilberforce: —

"My dear Buxton, "London, May 24. 1821.

"It is now more than thirty-three years since, after having given notice in the House of Commons that I should bring forward, for the first time, the question concerning the Slave Trade, it pleased God to visit me with a severe indisposition, by which indeed I was so exhausted that the ablest physician in London of that day declared that I had not stamina to last above a very few weeks. On this I went to Mr. Pitt and begged of him a promise, which he kindly and readily gave me, to take upon himself the conduct of that great cause.

"I thank God I am now free from any indisposition; but from my time of life, and much more from the state of my constitution, and my inability to bear inclemencies of weather and irregularities, which close attendance on the House of Commons often requires, I am reminded, but too intelligibly, of my being in such a state that I ought not to look confidently to my being

able to carry through any business of importance in the House of Commons.

"Now for many, many years I have been longing to bring forward that great subject, the condition of the negro slaves in our Trans-atlantic colonies, and the best means of providing for their moral and social improvement, and ultimately for their advancement to the rank of a free peasantry; a cause this, recommended to me, or rather enforced on me, by every consideration of religion, justice, and humanity.

"Under this impression I have been waiting with no little solicitude for a proper time and suitable circumstances of the country, for introducing this great business; and latterly, for some Member of Parliament, who, if I were to retire or to be laid by, would be an eligible leader in this holy enterprise.

"I have for some time been viewing you in this connection; and after what passed last night I can no longer forbear resorting to you, as I formerly did to Pitt; and earnestly conjuring you to take most seriously into consideration the expediency of your devoting yourself to this *blessed service*, so far as will be consistent with the due discharge of the obligations you have already contracted, and in part so admirably fulfilled, to war against the abuses of our Criminal Law, both in its structure and its administration. Let me then entreat you to form an alliance with me, that may truly be termed holy, and if I should be unable to commence the war (certainly not to be declared this session); and still more, if, when commenced, I should (as certainly would, I fear, be the case) be unable to finish it, do I entreat that you would continue to prosecute it. Your assurance to this effect would give me the greatest pleasure: pleasure is a bad term — let me rather say, peace and consolation; for alas! my friend, I feel but too deeply how little I have been duly assiduous and faithful in employing the talents committed to my stewardship; and in forming a *partnership* of this sort with you I cannot doubt that I should be doing an act highly pleasing to God, and beneficial to my fellow creatures. Both my head and heart are quite full to overflowing, but I must conclude. My dear friend, may it please God to bless you, both in your public and private course. If it be His will, may He render you an instrument of extensive usefulness; but above all, may He give you the disposition to say at all times, 'Lord, what

wouldest thou have me to do or to suffer?' looking to Him, through Christ, for wisdom and strength. And while active in business and fervent in spirit upon earth, may you have your conversation in heaven, and your affections set on things above. There may we at last meet together, with all we most love, and spend an eternity of holiness and happiness complete and unassailable.

"Ever affectionately yours,

"W. WILBERFORCE."

Many causes had been concurring to prepare Mr. Buxton for entering upon this "holy enterprise." His attention had, at an early period, been drawn, though slightly, to the questions of Slavery and the Slave Trade. In one of his private memoranda he enumerates among the causes for thankfulness, "the strong impression on my mother's mind, transfused into mine in very early life, of the iniquity of Slavery and the Slave Trade;" and he notices a remark which she often made, "while we continue to commit such a sin how can we ask forgiveness of our sins?" He mentions also that he used to ridicule his eldest sister for refusing to eat slave-grown sugar; "but," he adds, "her doing so made me think. Singular, too, that my first speech on entering college was upon the Slave Trade, and my first speech on entering life was at the Tower Hamlets on the same subject."

We have seen that he had become an active member of the African Institution; and although that body devoted its attention to the Slave Trade alone, and did not take up the kindred question of Slavery, yet his connection with it no doubt contributed to turn his mind to the varied sufferings of the negro race.

The reader need scarcely be reminded that the importation of fresh negroes from Africa to our colonies had been declared illegal in 1807, after a twenty years' struggle on the part of Mr. Wilberforce, Mr. Stephen,

Mr. Clarkson, and their distinguished coadjutors; and England had no sooner abolished her own trade, than with characteristic energy she strove to obtain, by persuasion or by purchase, a similar measure from the other European powers. Whilst, however, the British *Slave Trade* had been abolished, British *Slavery*, remained. Though no fresh negroes could now be introduced into our colonies, yet those who had been already imported were still held in bondage. It is singular how often the Slave Trade is confounded with Slavery, even in quarters where such a blunder would be least expected.

There were various reasons which prevented those who had effected the abolition of the Slave Trade from attempting also the emancipation of the slaves*; but we see in Mr. Wilberforce's letter that the latter was a subject which constantly weighed upon his mind, and filled him with painful solicitude.

When Mr. Buxton first entered Parliament, his attention was drawn to this question by a letter from his brother-in-law, Mr. William Forster, who, after describing the interest taken by Mr. Buxton's friends in his efforts for the improvement of prison discipline, expresses their earnest desire that he would "take up another most important and extensive question, the state of Africa, and of the slave population in the West Indies." "The attention and exertions of the wise and good," proceeds Mr. Forster, "have been directed, and, through the Divine blessing, not without much success, towards staying the progress of evil in the abolition of the Slave Trade; but now it is certainly time to turn

* In 1807, Earl Percy (afterwards Duke of Northumberland) proposed the emancipation of the negro children, but without effect.

the mind of the British public towards the situation of those in actual slavery."

Another circumstance, to which Mr. Buxton often referred, had prepared his mind for accepting the profferred advocacy of the Anti-slavery cause. He thus mentions it in a letter dated Oct. 22. 1821:—

"Two or three days before Priscilla Gurney died, she sent for me, as desiring to speak to me about something of importance. The moment she began to speak she was seized with a convulsion of coughing, which continued for a long time, racking her feeble frame. She still seemed determined to persevere, but at length, finding all strength exhausted, she pressed my hand and said, 'The poor, dear slaves!' I could not but understand her meaning, for during her illness she had repeatedly urged me to make their cause and condition the first object of my life, feeling nothing so heavy on her heart as their sufferings."

It was not, however, till after long and mature deliberation, that he accepted the weighty charge involved in Mr. Wilberforce's proposal. Indeed, he does not appear to have fully resolved upon undertaking it till a year and a half after the receipt of Mr. Wilberforce's letter; but he spent the interval as far as his other avocations would permit him, in a close study of the question in all its bearings. In this he was materially assisted by the present of a large collection of books connected with the subject from Mr. Hoare, one of the earliest members of the African Institution.

Many of his other friends encouraged him to enter upon this arduous undertaking, especially Mr. Samuel and Mr. Joseph John Gurney; from whom, as from Mr. Samuel Hoare, he received unremitting assistance throughout the contest against slavery.

What chiefly led him to hesitate in adopting this question as his own, was the fear that the discussion of it in

England might lead to a servile insurrection in the West Indies. He deeply felt the weight of this responsibility, and it was the subject of long and anxious thought. "If," said he, "a servile war should break out, and 50,000 perish, how should I like that?" But even this extreme supposition he met by the consideration, "If I had two sons I would rather choose to have one free and one dead, than both living enslaved." In his first Anti-slavery speech he enters at length into this difficulty, and mentions some of the considerations which had removed it from his mind; showing how often insurrections had been foretold by the West Indians, and, that their predictions had never been fulfilled; and further, that, even were this fear well grounded, the English government ought not to be terrified by it from examining into the infinitely greater evil in question.

He appears to have arrived at his final decision in the autumn of 1822; in the course of which Mr. Wilberforce and Mr. Macaulay visited Cromer Hall, for the purpose of discussing the question with him, and also with Dr. Lushington and Lord Suffield. Then was drawn the first outline of those plans in which each, from this time, took his respective and important share.

Mr. Wilberforce writes, after leaving Cromer: —

"My dear Buxton, "Oct. 5. 1822.

We brought much away from Cromer Hall, but we left there, as I have just discovered, O'Meara's 'Voice from St. Helena.' My dear friend, never I believe, while I remember anything, shall I forget the truly friendly reception we experienced under your hospitable roof. I love to muse about you all, and form suitable wishes for the comfort and good of each member of your happy circle—for a happy circle it is—and surely there is nothing in the world half so delightful as mutual confidence, affection and sympathy—to feel esteem as well as good-will towards every human being around you, not only in your own

house, but in the social circle that surrounds your dwelling, and to be conscious that every other being is glowing with the same esteem and love towards you. I hope it is not profane to say, that when associated with heavenly aspirations and relations, such a state is a sort of little heaven upon earth. My dear friend, never shall I direct henceforth to Cromer Hall without a number of delightful associations. God bless you all,—and so I trust he will. It is quite refreshing in such a world as this to think what a globule of friendship has been accumulated at Cromer from different little drops sprinkled over the sea-side. Give my kind remembrances to Mrs. Buxton, Priscilla, the Hoares, Mrs. Upcher, and indeed to all friends; to Mr. and Mrs. J. Gurney, and my old friend Mr. Hoare; to the Lushingtons and Lord Suffield, whom I hope to know better. Meanwhile,

"I am, ever affectionately yours,

"W. WILBERFORCE." *

A short time afterwards Mr. Wilberforce again wrote, to request that he would visit him at Marden Park to arrange their plan of operations for the ensuing session. He adds: —

"I have often rejoiced of late years in thinking of my having you for an associate and successor, as indeed I told you. Now, my dear Buxton, my remorse is sometimes very great, from my consciousness that we have not been duly active in endeavouring to put an end to that system of cruel bondage which for two centuries has prevailed in our West Indian colonies; and my idea is, that a little before Parliament meets, three or four of us should have a secret cabinet council, wherein we should deliberate to decide what course to pursue."

* The following verses, descriptive of Mr. Wilberforce, were written by Mr. Buxton during this visit, as part of a playful address to a travelling conjuror, named Lee Sugg.

"Farewell, meagre Sugg, we are bound to attend
On a guest who's at once our instructor and friend:
A conjuror too!—even there he will meet you,
And at your own weapons undoubtedly beat you.
A wizard is he—to allure away grief,
To give hope to the sad, to the wretched relief.
And what are the strange incantations he uses,
When sorrow he scatters, and joy he diffuses?
Himself is the charm, his manners are spells,
A conjuring art in his converse there dwells:
There's magic we know—and poor Africa knows!—
In the voice that was raised to extinguish her woes.
We ken not the potions and drugs which he blends,
But we're sure he's the power of enchanting his friends!"

Mr. Macaulay and Mr. Buxton accordingly arrived at Marden Park on the 8th of January; and (in the words of the biographers of Mr. Wilberforce) "long and deep were their deliberations, how best to shape those measures which were to change the structure of society throughout the Western World."*

It is pleasing to observe the spirit in which Mr. Buxton entered upon that session of Parliament, in which he was to commence his arduous Anti-slavery career. In his Commonplace book, after lamenting that "he was making no advance in spiritual things," he proceeds: —

"Has not my time been squandered in unworthy objects for one who has but a short time to prepare himself for immortality; for one who sees before him so much misery and so much vice, and who feels that labourers only are wanting to abate both the misery and the vice? I am sure that we live in days in which a strenuous advocate of what is right is nearly certain of success. I have no reason for despondence. The Prison cause and the Criminal Law cause have both signally prospered. Grant, O Lord God, that I may not spend my money for that which is not bread, and my labour for that which satisfieth not; but that I may choose for my first objects those which merit the dedication of all my powers, possessions, energies, and influence. Now, what are the objects thus deserving? The salvation of my own soul and the service of God, promoting the salvation of others and their welfare.

"O for that spirit of devotion, of gratitude, of love to Christ, of indifference to the world, which the Lord gave me in my illness! Let me then never pass a day without serious and repeated prayer — that is indispensable. Let me renounce the world as much as possible; as much as possible acknowledge God in all my ways and words, and let me manfully resist every temptation which may assault and endanger my soul. O God, grant these things through thy blessed Son! Next, how can I promote the welfare of others? *In private*, by more seriousness

* Life of Wilberforce, vol. v. p. 160.

in family devotions, and by much more command of temper; by more industry; by more economy, sparing on my own pleasure and expending on God's service. *In public*, by attending to the Slave Trade, Slavery, Indian widows burning themselves*, the completion of those objects which have made some advance, viz., Criminal Law, Prisons, and Police. Send thy blessed Spirit, O great God, to my aid, and for my guidance, that, renouncing sin, I may walk worthy of my high vocation, in and through Jesus Christ my Lord."

To Mrs. Upcher, at Sheringham, near Cromer.

"London, Feb. 1823.

"My hands are entirely full with slaves, Indian widows, and the beer question; and with the Spanish ambassador, who is coming to dinner. How far, how very far, do I prefer Cromer and its neighbourhood to this big town! If I had my choice, and could exactly think it right to follow my own inclination, I should soon be disqualified for franking. As for fame, 'that last infirmity of noble minds,' it is not much of an infirmity of mine. To be sure I get but little of it, and that very little I care as little about; but then Indian widows and Slavery,—these are subjects worth any sacrifices: so no grumbling, in which I was going to indulge."

To John Henry North, Esq.

(After congratulating him warmly on his success at the Irish bar):—

"Feb. 13.

"Now get into Parliament, and be wise enough to come there absolutely independent. * * * Come into Parliament, and join

* He had been encouraged to hope that this question would be taken up by the ministers. He writes in 1822: "I am highly gratified to find that Government have some notion of taking up the subject of my Indian widows. That *would* be delightful."

These hopes proved to be unfounded; and on the 18th of June, 1823, he again brought the subject formally before the House, but without success. Soon afterwards he says, in a note to a friend, "I have been seeing the Governor of India this morning, about the annual immolation of thousands of poor widows. I do, from the bottom of my heart, wish that he, and such as he, felt as much about them as I do." From time to time he brought the subject before the House of Commons, remarking on the culpability of Government in continuing to countenance this atrocious custom. The result will be given in a subsequent part of this narrative.

us with all your force on such subjects as the abolition of the Slave Trade and of Slavery, the improvement of the Criminal Law and Prisons, the advancement of civilisation and Christianity in India. Make these and such as these your objects, and you will do vast service to mankind, to yourself, and to your friends. I do not mean, however, that these should prevent you from advancing in your own pursuits. I firmly believe that they will promote your welfare, taking welfare in the most worldly sense."

To the same, soon afterwards.

"I presume you have seen that the great subject of slavery has fallen into my hands. I count on you as an assured coadjutor. Will you accept a few pamphlets, by way of brief, and some for circulation among persons of influence! How heartily and continually I wish you were with me in the House! If it does not suit you, and if you do not suit it, I will give up all claims to the gift of prophecy."

To his eldest Son.

"My dear Boy, "March 20.

"I was very glad to receive your letter. I hear that you are very attentive to dear mamma when you ride with her: that is right. * * * You may tell her that I did not speak last night; nobody replied to Wilberforce about the slaves, so I had no opportunity of saying anything. I am glad your gardens are so nice and neat and beautiful. I quite long to see you all, and find it rather hard to be kept away; but I am very busy, working hard for the poor slaves. How glad I shall be to hear you make a speech, when you are a man, in their favour!

"How are the pheasants, and the baby, and the rats, and the ponies, and all the other animals? Love to you all."

To Mrs. Buxton.

"March 22.

"Wednesday is the very earliest day I can be down with you, and it requires all my energy and determination to keep to that. This minute Wilmot, Under-Secretary of State, has been here, desiring me to call on Lord Bathurst on Wednesday relative to my Slave bill. * * * I am very earnest about Slavery; it seems to me that this is to be the main business of my life,—this and Hindoo widows; I am well contented and want no

other business. How odd the transitions of the human mind are!—how occupied mine was with pheasants and partridges till I left Norfolk! and I firmly believe I have not thought of them five times during my whole stay in London; but they certainly occupied too much of my time in the autumn. You cannot think how affectionate and loving Wilberforce was when I called on him yesterday. I think it odd that we should suit so well, having hardly one quality in common."

Anti-slavery operations were now commenced with vigour, and for some time all went on well. Dr. Lushington, Lord Suffield, and several others, who had taken a prominent part in the reformation of Prison Discipline, now threw all their energies into this new undertaking. Early in March Mr. Wilberforce published his well-known "Appeal on behalf of the slaves." At about the same time the Anti-Slavery Society was formed (Mr. Buxton being appointed a Vice-President), and the Committee engaged warmly in the task of collecting evidence and spreading information through the country. Public feeling was soon roused into activity, and petitions began to flow in; the lead was taken by the Society of Friends, and it was determined that the presentation of their appeal by the hands of Mr. Wilberforce should be the opening of the parliamentary campaign. He introduced it by saying that a similar petition which he had had the honour of presenting nearly thirty years before, had been the first effort against the kindred iniquity of the Slave Trade, and that in presenting this one "he considered that the first stone was laid of an edifice which would stand at some future period, an ornament to the land."

Mr. Canning asked whether it was his intention to found any motion upon it? Mr. Wilberforce said, "It was not, but that such was the intention of an esteemed friend of his."

Mr. Buxton then gave notice that on the 15th of May "he would submit a motion, that the House should take into consideration the state of slavery in the British Colonies." *

A few weeks before his motion came on, he communicated his intentions to the Government in the following letter addressed to Mr. Wilmot Horton for the perusal of Earl Bathurst: —

"My dear Sir, "Spring Gardens Hotel, April 15. 1823.

"A severe indisposition is, I think, some, though a poor, apology for not having performed my promise of writing to you.

"On the subject of the line I shall take about slavery, I must confess that my views are not absolutely determined, but such as they are I will state them. You will not, however, consider me absolutely and closely bound to them.

"The subject divides itself into two parts:—the condition of the existing slaves, and the condition of their children.

"With regard to the former, I wish the following improvements:—

"1. That the slaves should be attached to the island, and, under modifications, to the soil. 2. That they cease to be chattels in the eye of the law. 3. That their testimony be received 'quantum valeat.' 4. That when any one lays his claim to the services of a negro, the *onus probandi* should rest on the claimant. 5. That obstructions to manumission should be removed. 6. That the provisions of the Spanish law (fixing by competent authority the value of the slave, and allowing him to purchase a day at a time) should be introduced. 7. That no governor, judge, or attorney-general should be a slave-owner. 8. That an effectual provision should be made for the religious instruction of the slaves. 9. That marriage should be sanctioned and enforced. 10. That the Sunday should be devoted by the slave to repose and religious instruction; and that other time should be allotted for the cultivation of his provision-grounds. 11. That some measures (but what I cannot say)

* Hansard, vol. viii. p. 627.

should be taken to restrain the authority of the master in punishing his slaves; and that some substitute be found for the driving system.

"These are the proposed qualifications of the existing slavery; but I am far more anxiously bent upon the extinction of slavery altogether, by rendering all the Negro children, born after a certain day, free: for them it will be necessary to provide education.

"God grant that his Majesty's ministers may be disposed to accomplish these objects, or to permit others to accomplish them!"

In reply to an urgent request for delay, he again writes to Mr. Wilmot Horton: —

"May 10.

"Your letter really gives me great pain. I do not like to refuse anything you ask. I do not like to appear obstinate; but the opinion of all the persons with whom I act is strongly opposed to any delay, in which opinion I as strongly concur.

"The more the subject opens upon me, the more do I think that I should be answerable for a great crime if I consented to let the session slip away without proposing something. In short, pray excuse me for saying that on Wednesday I *will* bring forward my motion."

On the 15th of May he wrote to Mrs. Upcher: —

"In five minutes I start for the House. I hope to begin at five o'clock. I am in good health, in excellent spirits, with a noble cause, and without fear. If I am only given a nimble tongue, we shall do."

Then took place the first debate on the subject of Negro Slavery. Mr. Buxton began it by moving a resolution, "That the state of slavery is repugnant to the principles of the British Constitution and of the Christian Religion; and that it ought to be gradually abolished throughout the British Colonies with as much expedition as may be found consistent with a due regard to the well-being of the parties concerned."

In his opening speech he plainly declared "The

object at which we aim is the *extinction of slavery* — nothing less than the extinction of slavery,—in nothing less than the whole of the British dominions: not, however, the rapid termination of that state; not the sudden emancipation of the negro; but such preparatory steps, such measures of precaution, as, by slow degrees, and in a course of years, first fitting and qualifying the slaves for the enjoyment of freedom, shall gently conduct us to the annihilation of slavery."

When we observe these words, and the propositions embodied in Mr. Buxton's letter to Earl Bathurst, we cannot help feeling astonished that the Abolitionists should have been so long and so severely blamed for having rashly set the slaves free before they had fitted them for freedom; whereas, it was the Abolitionists who desired to approach emancipation by a long series of preparatory measures. It was the planters, as the sequel will prove, who rejected these preparatory measures, because they were meant to pave the way to ultimate emancipation.

The plan unfolded in Mr. Buxton's speech exactly corresponded with that contained in his letter to Mr. Wilmot Horton; but he especially urged the importance of emancipating all the children of the slaves; pointing out how surely, yet silently, the curse of slavery would thus die away. He proved that this had been done in other countries, without that noise and tumult with which his opponents predicted that it would be attended. This change was, in fact, at that very time silently proceeding in Ceylon, Bencoolen, and St. Helena.

"Now, one word," he said, "as to the right of the master. There are persons whose notions of justice are so confused and confounded by slavery, as to suppose that the planter has some-

thing like an honest title to the person of the slave. We have been so long accustomed to talk of 'my slave,' and 'your slave,' and what he will fetch, if sold—that we are apt to imagine that he is really *yours or mine*, and that we have a substantial right to keep or sell him. Then let us just for a moment fathom this right. Here is a certain valuable commodity, and here are two claimants for it — a white man and a black man. Now, what is the commodity in dispute? The body of the black man. The white man says, 'it is mine,' and the black man, 'it is mine.' Now the question is, if every man had his own, to whom would the black body belong? The claim of the black man is just this — Nature gave it him — he holds it by the grant of God. That compound of bone and muscles is his, by the most irreproachable of all titles — a title which admits not, what every other species of title admits, a suspicion of violence, or fraud, or irregularity. Will any man say he came by his body in an illegal manner? Does any man suspect he played the knave and purloined his limbs? I do not mean to say that the negro is not a thief—but he must be a very subtle thief indeed if he stole even so much as his own little finger.

"At least you will admit this. The negro has a pretty good *primâ facie* claim to his own person. If any man thinks he has a better—the *onus probandi* rests with him. Then we come to the claim of the white man. What is the foundation of your right? It shall be the best that can be possibly conceived. You received him from your father — very good. Your father bought him from a neighbouring planter — very good. That planter bought him of a trader in the Kingston Slave Market, and that trader bought him of a man-merchant in Africa. So far you are quite safe! How did the man-merchant acquire him? *He stole him*, he kidnapped him. The very root of your claim is robbery, violence, inconceivable wickedness. If anything on earth was ever produced by evidence, it was proved by the Slave Trade Committee that the method of obtaining slaves in Africa was robbery, man-stealing, and murder. Your pure title rests on these sacred foundations. If your slave came direct from Africa, your right to his person is absolutely nothing. But your claim to the child born in Jamaica is (if I may use the expression) less still. The new-born infant has done, can have done, nothing to forfeit his right to freedom. And to talk

about rights, justice, equity, and law as connected with slavery, is downright nonsense. If we had no interest in the case, and we were only speaking of the conduct of another nation, we should all use the same language; and we should speak of slavery as we now speak of slave-trading — that is, we should call it rank, naked, flagrant, undisguised injustice.

"Now, sir, observe the moderation with which we proceed. We say, 'Make no more slaves, desist from that iniquity; stop, abstain from an act, in itself as full of guilt, entailing in its consequences as much of misery, as any felony you can mention.' We do not say, 'Retrace your steps,' but 'stop.' We do not say, 'Make reparation for the wrong you have done;' but 'do no more wrong; go no further; complete what you have commenced; screw from your slave all that his bones and his muscles will yield you,—only stop there:' and when every slave now living shall have found repose in the grave, then let it be said that the country is satiated with slavery, and has done with it for ever."

An animated debate ensued, and Mr. Canning moved and carried certain amendments to Mr. Buxton's resolution; the most important of which was the insertion of the words, "with a fair and equitable consideration of the interests of private property." Plausible as this addition seemed, the Anti-slavery party feared, and, as we shall see, but too justly, that it would afford the West Indians a handle on future occasions; but the discussion grew warmest when Mr. Canning brought forward his plan, that the proposed amelioration should be suggested to the colonial legislatures, but should only be enforced in the island of Trinidad, which being one of the crown colonies had no legislature of its own, with the further condition, however, that any unexpected resistance to the suggestions should be met by authority.

The following were the resolutions carried by Mr. Canning, to which we shall have frequent occasion to

refer in detailing the proceedings during the subsequent ten years.

1st. "That it is expedient to adopt effectual and decisive measures for ameliorating the condition of the slave population in his Majesty's colonies.

2nd. "That, through a determined and persevering, but at the same time judicious and temperate enforcement of such measures, this House looks forward to a progressive improvement in the character of the slave population, such as may prepare them for a participation in those civil rights and privileges which are enjoyed by other classes of his Majesty's subjects.

3rd. "That this House is anxious for the accomplishment of this purpose, at the earliest period that shall be compatible with the well-being of the slaves themselves, with the safety of the colonies, and with a fair and equitable consideration of the interests of private property."

The debate concluded with a reply from Mr. Buxton, which is mentioned by Mr. Wilberforce as having been "short and, not sweet indeed, but excellent." * We will give one extract from it.† It was in answer to the argument that the danger arose, not from slavery itself, but from the discussion of slavery in the House.

"What then!" he exclaimed, "does the slave require any hint from us that he is a slave, and that slavery is of all conditions the most miserable? Why, sir, he hears this, he sees it; he feels it, too, in all around him. He sees his harsh, uncompensated labour; he hears the crack of the whip; he feels — he writhes under the lash. Does not this betray the secret?

> "'This is no flattery; these are counsellors
> That feelingly persuade him what he is.'

He sees the mother of his children stripped naked before the gang of male negroes and flogged unmercifully; he sees his children sent to market, to be sold at the best price they will fetch; he sees in himself, not a man, but a thing — by West

* Life, vol. v. p. 178.
† Hansard's Debates. New Series, vol. ix. p. 358.

Indian law a chattel, an implement of husbandry, a machine to produce sugar, a beast of burden! And will any man tell me that the negro, with all this staring him in the face, flashing in his eyes, when he rises in the morning and when he goes to bed at night—never dreams that there is injustice in such treatment till he sits himself down to the perusal of an English newspaper, and there, to his astonishment, discovers that there are enthusiasts in England who from the bottom of their hearts deplore and abhor all negro slavery? There are such enthusiasts; I am one of them; and while we breathe we will never abandon the cause, till that thing — that chattel — is reinstated in all the privileges of man!"

Although the emancipation of children was lost, and even the alleviations of the slaves' condition were not to be compulsory, yet this debate was an important step gained; and Mr. Buxton's emphatic words in his opening speech were verified: — "A few minutes ago was commenced that process which will conclude, though not speedily, in the extinction of slavery throughout the British dominions."

Mr. Buxton had various communications with Mr. Canning after the debate, and especially one long interview in company with Mr. Wilberforce and Mr. William Smith. On this important occasion, for which he had carefully prepared, he thoroughly ascertained Mr. Canning's opinions, on all points connected with the treatment, present and prospective, of colonial slaves. He then wrote down what had passed, and submitted the statement to Mr. Canning. The document strikingly displays the laborious accuracy and the sturdy determination to verify every point of his case, which characterised his conduct throughout the entire contest. Mr. Canning returned the paper with many autograph notes upon it, and Mr. Buxton therefore exactly knew what were the ministers' intentions at this period. Neither

party, however, were as yet aware of the difficulties of the case.

In accordance with the Resolutions of the House, at the end of May, Circular Letters were addressed by the Government to the various colonial authorities, recommending them to adopt the following reforms: —

1. To provide the means of religious instruction and Christian education for the slave population.
2. To put an end to markets and to labour on the Sunday, and, instead of Sunday, to allow the negroes equivalent time on other days for the cultivation of their provision grounds.
3. To protect the slaves by law in the acquisition and possession of property, and in its transmission by bequest or otherwise.
4. To legalise the marriages of slaves, and to protect them in the enjoyment of their connubial rights.
5. To prevent the separation of families by sale or otherwise.
6. To restrain generally the power, and to prevent the abuse, of arbitrary punishment at the will of the master.
7. To abolish the degrading corporal punishment of females.
8. To admit the testimony of slaves in courts of justice.
9. To prevent the seizure of slaves detached from the estate or plantation to which they belonged.
10. To remove all the existing obstructions to manumission, and to grant to the slave the power of redeeming himself and his wife and children at a fair price.
11. To abolish the use of the driving whip in the field, either as an emblem of authority, or as a stimulus to labour.
12. To establish Savings Banks for the use of the slaves.

Surely there was good ground for anticipating that the Colonial Assemblies would gladly listen to these temperate and salutary suggestions.

While anxiously awaiting the result, Mr. Buxton deliberately weighed the propriety of accepting an invitation from Lord Huntingdon to visit the West Indies in

person; but when this plan was referred to Mr. Wilberforce he gave a most decided opinion against it.*

Sir James Mackintosh had not hitherto taken any part in this question; and Mr. Buxton, being extremely anxious to engage his brilliant abilities and benevolent heart in its favour, addressed the following letter to him: —

"My dear Sir James, "Cromer Hall, Nov. 30. 1823.

"Your letter reached me just as I was leaving town. I much regret that I was thus prevented from talking with you on Criminal Law and Colonial Reform. The latter of these very much occupies my mind. I feel that a question of greater magnitude, affecting the happiness of a larger number of persons, has seldom been agitated; and I also feel that the crisis has arrived, in which we must either begin to ameliorate the condition of the slaves, and, indeed to strike a blow at slavery, or in which slavery will be more firmly established than ever. I am, however, I must confess, alarmed, not at the reproach which is heaped on me, nor at the danger *said* to be produced in the West Indies by my motion. I disregard the former, and utterly disbelieve the latter: but I am alarmed at the prodigious strength of the West Indian party, and at the inability of the person to whom the cause of seven hundred thousand human beings is committed. How often have I wished that that good cause were blessed with the *full, hearty,* unreserved co-operation of yourself! * * * If I have to fight the battle without such aid, the cause of justice and humanity will undoubtedly suffer

* Mr. Buxton could not, as yet, have been aware of the reception which his proposed reforms would meet with in the West Indies, and the deadly hostility with which their author would be regarded, or he would not have entertained for an instant the idea of this visit. Capt. Studholme Hodgson, of the 19th Foot, in his work called "Truths from the West Indies," after mentioning "the volumes of abuse lavished upon Sharpe, Wilberforce, Lushington, Stephen, Buxton, and Admiral Fleming," continues:— "This enmity seems to be more deadly towards the two latter than even that entertained for the others; and I will undertake to say, that were these two gentlemen to arrive in any island in the West Indies, and venture to move out unsurrounded by a guard of those grateful beings, who, night and day, implore blessings upon them, they would inevitably be torn to pieces by the Europeans, who would all vie as to who could most mangle their bodies."— (P. 190.)

from the feebleness of its advocate. With that aid, and with that of Brougham, of whom we are sure, I doubt not that the sons of the present slaves will be raised to a state of villeinage, and their grandsons will be freemen. * * * Now I have written this I am ready to tear it to pieces, and to wonder at my own presumption in having written it. It shall however go. It is an entreaty for more than half a million of human beings who cannot supplicate for themselves, and against whom there are many who can canvass and are canvassing stoutly."

All his letters to Mr. Wilberforce have been destroyed; an unfortunate circumstance, for their number and interest are attested by those of Mr. Wilberforce to himself, which still remain. One of the latter, dated December 27. 1823, appears to be a reply to Mr. Buxton's account of the laborious study of documents which occupied him during that winter.

"My dear Friend,—Excellent! Excellent! I highly approve of your practice. Of course I approve with one understood condition, that you endeavour to bear the apostle's precept in mind,—'Whatsoever ye do, in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus.' This will be rendering your slavery studies 'Exercises unto Godliness.' But otherwise I assure you I have found books steal away my heart from the *Sursum Corda* habit (spirituality of mind I mean, living among invisibles) more than worldly business. Excuse this hint; it is prompted by true friendship. You greatly disparage your faculties. If you require more time to imprint things in your mind, it is because you cut the letters deeply. Alas! I know from experience, that superficial engraving is too often and too easily effaced."

CHAPTER IX.

SLAVERY. 1823—1826.

EXCITEMENT IN THE WEST INDIES.—THE NEGROES REFUSE TO WORK. — SEVERE MEASURES. — DEATH OF THE MISSIONARY SMITH. — THE ABOLITIONISTS BITTERLY REPROACHED. — MR. BUXTON'S PLAN. — INTERVIEWS WITH MR. CANNING. — POPULAR CLAMOURS. — THE GOVERNMENT DRAWS BACK. — ANXIETIES AND DOUBTS. — LETTER FROM MR. J. J. GURNEY.—THE DEBATE.—THE GOVERNMENT GIVES WAY. — MR. BUXTON ATTACKS THEM. — ENCOURAGEMENTS FROM MR. WILBERFORCE.—MR. BROUGHAM'S SPEECH ON SMITH'S CASE.— ITS EFFECT ON THE COUNTRY. — MR. WILBERFORCE RETIRES. — THE SMALL NUMBER OF ABOLITIONISTS IN PARLIAMENT. — DR. LUSHINGTON. — MR. MACAULAY. — MR. BUXTON'S POLICY. — FREE PEOPLE OF COLOUR.—TREATMENT OF MR. SHREWSBURY.—DEBATE. — DELIBERATIONS. — THE LONDON PETITION. — MR. DENMAN'S MOTION. — A YEAR'S PAUSE.

THE news of Mr. Buxton's attack on what the planters considered to be their just rights, and of the acquiescence of the Government in his principles, were received in the West Indies with the most vehement indignation.* For some weeks after the arrival of the despatches, not the slightest restraint seems to have been put on the violence of their rage, which drove them to the wildest designs. Thoughts were openly entertained of resisting the innovations of the Government by force of arms. It was even proposed to throw off the yoke of the mother country, and place themselves under the protection of America. They could find no language sufficiently bitter to express their rancour †; and the colo-

* To the honour, be it said, of the Islands of Grenada, St. Vincent's and St. Christopher's, they did not join in the outcry raised by the generality of the West Indian Islands.

† The following extract from the Jamaica Journal is a specimen of the

nial legislatures unanimously refused submission to the recommendations of the Government.

When the Order in Council reached Demerara, the authorities of the colony endeavoured to conceal the intelligence from the black population. Their precautions were worse than useless; exaggerated rumours soon spread abroad. The negroes fancied that "the great King of England" had set them free, and that the planters had suppressed his edict; and under this impression the slaves on several estates refused to work. Compulsion was resorted to — they resisted, and commenced outrages on the property and persons of the whites. Martial law was proclaimed, and the soldiers called out.

Destitute alike of organisation, of leaders, and of arms, the slaves were at once reduced to subjection. In performing this duty not one soldier was killed; but pressed down and running over was the measure of vengeance dealt to the unhappy negroes.

"It was deemed fitting," said Mr. Brougham, "to make tremendous examples of them. Considerably above a hundred fell in the field, where *they* did not succeed in putting one soldier to death. A number of the prisoners, also, it is said, were hastily drawn out at the close of the affray and shot. How many in the whole have since perished by sentences of the court does not appear, but by the end of September forty-seven had been executed. A more horrid tale of blood yet remains to be told. Within the short space of a week ten were torn in pieces by the lash; some of these had been condemned to six

abuse lavished upon Parliament, Mr. Canning, Earl Bathurst, and "those canting hypocritical rascals," the Abolitionists. (No. 11, Saturday, June 28. 1823.) . . . "We will pray the Imperial Parliament to amend their origin, which is bribery; to cleanse their consciences, which are corrupt; to throw off their disguise, which is hypocrisy; to break with their false allies, who are the saints; and, finally, to banish from among them all the purchased rogues, who are three-fourths of their number."

or seven hundred lashes; five to one thousand each; of which inhuman torture one had received the whole, and two almost the whole at once."*

The colonists were not satisfied by the severity with which the rebel negroes had been visited. For some time the attention of religious men in England had been drawn to the wretched ignorance and depravity of the lower orders in our colonial islands. Various denominations of Christians had sent out missionaries to instruct them, and the Independents and Wesleyans had distinguished themselves by their Christian zeal. It was no path of flowers which these missionaries had chosen. The colonists were violently opposed to change; and with the usual feelings of despotic masters, they could not endure the idea of allowing their slaves to be educated; yet, in the face of danger and persecution, the missionaries persevered, and many of the negroes were brought to the knowledge of religion. The planters had tried every means to stop this "nuisance;" and when the rebellion broke out, they resolved to fix it upon the Christian teachers of the negroes.

The particulars of "Smith's case," afterwards so ably treated by Mr. Brougham, need not here be dwelt on. Suffice it to say, that he was an Independent missionary; was tried in a manner not only unjust, but absolutely illegal, before a court-martial of militia officers, and condemned to be hanged; but his treatment in prison destroyed his previously failing health, and he died in his dungeon in time to anticipate the executioner.†

* Hansard's Debates. New Series, vol. xi. p. 995.

† While Smith was dying in his prison (which is described as a place only suited to purposes of torture), he was compelled by his persecutors to draw a bill upon the funds of the London Missionary Society, in order to defray the expenses of his so-called trial. Many years afterwards the secretary of that Society, in arranging some old papers, met with this bill. In

The news of the ferment among the colonists, with the rapidly succeeding intelligence of the revolt of the negroes, of their overthrow, and of the severities inflicted upon them and upon their teachers, soon reached England. The disappointment and grief of the leading members of the anti-slavery party were great indeed; their lukewarm partisans left them at once, and joined in the loud outcry which arose against them. They were denounced as the causes of the disaffections of the colonists and the disorders among the slaves. The people at large, in looking at the confusions of the colonies, did not remember how gentle a remedy for the admitted evil of slavery was the one proposed by Mr. Buxton; that all parties in England had agreed, with some modifications, as to its prudence; and that only to the wilfulness and prejudice of the colonists were these unhappy results to be ascribed. But the angry reproaches which rang in Mr. Buxton's ears were as nothing when compared with the mortification he experienced on discovering that the Government, appalled by the consequences of the steps which they had taken, and apparently as regardless of their own dignity as of the interests of their black subjects, were determined to forfeit the pledge which Mr. Canning had given — that, if obedience were not voluntarily rendered by the colonial legislatures, it should be enforced. Rumours to this effect soon spread abroad; but they were of so indefinite a character, that the Abolitionists could not tell what steps the Government proposed to take, nor what

looking at it, his attention was drawn to one corner of the sheet, and, on examining it more carefully, he found, written in a minute hand, the reference "2 Cor. iv. 8, 9:" on turning to which he found the text, "We are troubled on every side, yet not distressed; we are perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed."

preparations should be made against them. All the circumstances seemed to call on Mr. Buxton to stop, but far from staying his steps he rather pushed forward. He was contemplating a new plan, namely, the emancipation of all children under seven years of age, ample compensation being granted to the masters; the children were to be educated and maintained by the British Government till they were seven years old, and then apprenticed to their former masters; after which they should be free.

The following letters will show fully how the sense of the difficulty of his position, and of the necessity there was for firmly maintaining it, gradually increased in his mind.

To Zachary Macaulay, Esq.

"Ampton, Jan. 14. 1824.

"Here I am, and have had the satisfaction of finding Wilberforce in good health. He seems by no means discouraged about our cause. Clarkson appears to have done his work well. At Norwich our friends were somewhat intimidated; but he had a meeting there, which revived all their ardour. * * * I have been hard at work, reading and making extracts from all the parliamentary slave papers. I am forming a dictionary, in which I insert information under different heads; I call it 'My Macaulay.'"*

On going to London in February he writes to Mrs. Buxton, who remained for a week or two longer at Cromer Hall: —

"Feb. 9.

"As yet we have had no debate on Slavery, but our foes are so very furious that I imagine we shall soon begin. I am intensely busy. On Saturday we had a meeting, to which I read

* When any of Mr. Macaulay's anti-slavery friends wanted information, they used to say, "Let us look it out in Macaulay," and rarely were they disappointed in their references to him.

my plan. The more I think of it, the more I like it. We meet again on Saturday: in the interim, an attack will probably be made on us, which I am to answer. I shall endeavour to do it with effect. We have a capital case as to the Demerara insurrection. Smith is innocent. They have offered him mercy if he will ask for it, and he has refused, standing on his innocence. I am in excellent spirits, and hold my head very high in the matter, and mean to be rather bold in my defence. I expect to see Canning to-morrow; he seems very cold to me, and the report is he will join the West Indians. If he does, we shall go to war with him in earnest."

"Feb. 10.

"My interview with Canning is for the purpose of ascertaining what Government means to do, and of seeing whether he is disposed to receive any plan from us."

"Feb. 11.

"I am so languid with over thought and over work, that I hardly know how to write, but it is worth while to spend one's strength on that which, if it succeeds, will change the condition, almost the nature, of 700,000 human beings. On Saturday we meet Canning at 12 o'clock, and Brougham, and all the leaders of our party, at the Duke of Gloucester's, at 3 o'clock. Then we shall decide on our course. I am not one bit discouraged, and heartily wish a discussion could be brought about, as I think it would change public opinion. How much, how very much happier I am in my Cromer retreat, than in the midst of all this bustle and turbulence! When you come, I shall be quieter, I hope. I am obliged to attend constantly at the House."

"Canning's Office, 6 o'clock, Feb. 14.

"We have had a very unsatisfactory interview with Canning, * * * The Government mean *to forfeit their pledge*, and to do next to nothing. * * * I have now seen Canning again. He promises to postpone any declaration to Parliament till he sees my plan."

To a Friend.

"Feb. 16.

"The degree of, opposition I will not call it, but virulence, against me is quite surprising. I much question whether there

is a more unpopular individual than myself in the House just at this moment. For this I do not care.

"17*th*. — The slavery question looks wretchedly. I begin to think that, opposed as we are by the West Indians, deserted by Government, and deemed enthusiasts by the public, we shall be able to do little or nothing. However, I rejoice that we have tried."

It was indeed no light unpopularity which Mr. Buxton had incurred. Both within and without the walls of the House, ridicule and abuse were heaped upon the Abolitionists during the first years of their attack on slavery. Their conduct was referred to the basest motives, and they were generally stigmatized as fools or knaves, sometimes as both. When the storm was at its highest, one of Mr. Buxton's friends asked him, "What shall I say when I hear people abusing you?" "Say!" he replied, snapping his fingers, "say *that*. You good folk think too much of your good name. Do right, and *right will be done you*." Yet he was not indifferent to the odium which he incurred. Several years afterwards, when public opinion had changed, he expresses, in one of his papers, his gratitude to God, "that my privileges and enjoyments in life have not been destroyed; that my enemies (enemies of mine, because I am the friend of the enslaved) have not triumphed over me; that I cannot now say, as David did, and as I was once prone to repeat, 'Reproach hath broken my heart.'"

To Mrs. Buxton.

"Feb. 17.

"I see very clearly that I shall not be able to go down to Cromer; my absence would further intimidate our few friends, who are sufficiently timid as it is. * * * I keep up my spirits pretty well, but what with the mental fatigue I have undergone, and the disappointment we have experienced, I cannot feel very light-hearted."

"Feb. 1824.

"We had a very bustling day on Saturday; a meeting with Canning at 12 o'clock, in which he told us, that Government had determined to *yield to the West Indian clamour, and do nothing, except in Trinidad*, where there is no Colonial Assembly. There they will do everything they promised last year. This timidity is very painful. It frustrates all our hopes, and it will enable the West Indians to say that we are wild enthusiastic people, and that the people of England ought to be guided by the sober discretion of Government—which sober discretion is down-right timidity."

To Joseph John Gurney, Esq.

"Feb. 24.

"H—— sent you, I believe, my plan. It has undergone material improvements; when first promulgated, it met with no support. At the first meeting at the Duke of Gloucester's it was received very coldly; at the second it obtained some faint praise; at the third, an unanimous vote, supported by Lord Lansdowne, Brougham, Mackintosh, and twenty others, sends it to Government, with the sanction of the meeting. I have been reading Smith's trial. If ever I speak on that subject, as I surely will, it will be without qualifying circumstances. He is as innocent as you are."

The ministers refused to adopt Mr. Buxton's scheme; and as the 16th of March approached (the day appointed by Mr. Canning for the discussion of the question), the Anti-slavery party, now reduced to a very small number, became much discouraged and depressed. The Government did not conceal that they meant to relinquish the policy of the preceding year; and it seemed probable that, having thus come to a breach with the Anti-slavery leaders, these latter would be treated as scapegoats on whom public indignation might be poured. Under these circumstances, a difference of opinion arose in the Anti-slavery councils as to the course to be pursued.

Many advised that the anticipated attack from Mr. Canning should be received in silence, and that the Anti-slavery party should not come forward to state their own case till some days afterwards, when the first impression made by his eloquence should have died away. On hearing that the venerable Mr. Stephen concurred in this advice, Mr. Buxton exclaimed —

"'Tis odds, indeed, when valiant Warwick flies."*

To the course recommended he himself was altogether opposed; he wished to make a stand at once, and indeed to act on the offensive, by exposing the vacillation of the Government, if it should prove that they did not intend to fulfil the expectations held out in the preceding year. In these views he was supported by Dr. Lushington, Mr. William Smith, Mr. W. Evans, and Mr. S. Hoare.

Mr. J. J. Gurney writes to him: —

"My dear Brother, "Norwich, 3 mo. 10th, 1824.

"I feel very much for thee and for our cause in the prospect of the approaching discussion in Parliament, and I feel inclined to remind thee (however needlessly) of the apostle's injunction, 'Quit you like men, be strong.' * * * I look upon Colonial Slavery as a monster who must have a very long succession hard knocks before he will expire. Why should we expect to get his extinction *into full train* in less than ten years? And why should we be discouraged overmuch, if the first knock has no other effect than to render the gentleman more lively and energetic than usual? * * * With regard to thyself, as I am fond of thy popularity, I am prone to dislike the contrary. But I have a strong belief that, in due time, thy history will afford a plain exemplification of the certainty of a divine promise, 'Them that honour me, I will honour!' Till then be content to suffer thy portion of persecution, and let no frowns of adversaries, no want

* Shakespere.

of faith, no private feeling of thine own incompetency, either deprive thee of thy spirits or spoil thy speech."

Thus encouraged, Mr. Buxton resolved to persevere: the other leaders gradually fell into his views, and the plan of operations was arranged. The previous division of opinion had, however, been a source of great anxiety to him; and he was almost worn out by his unremitting exertions, which had of late been chiefly directed to the procuring digested proofs of the cruelty with which the slaves were treated, and of the rapid decrease of the black population. He writes on the 12th February, 1824: — "The weight of business, and, worse still, of thought, which overhangs me at this time, is greater than I ever experienced before;" and on another occasion,—"I am fatigued, I am distressed with fatigue." The prospect before him was full of difficulties. The small Anti-slavery party were attacked on all sides with fury. In the House there were hardly more than half-a-dozen staunch friends to the cause, while two hundred members were considered to be more or less directly inimical to it; and now, if the Government were to be swayed by the tide of public opinion, and abandon its schemes of the previous year, how could the small unaided band of Abolitionists indulge the hope of even ultimate success in their undertaking?

Their fears were but too well founded. Mr. Canning carefully withdrew from his connection with those whose principles and measures he had the year before, in a great degree, adopted as his own, but whom he now discovered to be acting "under the impulses of enthusiasm;" and he informed the House that the Government was determined to compel the ameliorations in Trinidad, but to apply for the present no measure more stringent than "admonition" to the contumacious colonies. One spe-

cimen of the graceful eloquence by which his speech was distinguished, we cannot refrain from inserting. Having shown that the conduct of the people of Jamaica might well have justified severe coercive measures, he adds, "Undoubtedly it would be easy to select passages from the Jamaica gazettes which might put Parliament in a towering passion, but my indignation is restrained by consideration of the powerlessness of the body from which the offence comes, compared to the omnipotence of that to which it is offered. The consciousness of superior strength disarms the spirit of resentment. I could revenge, but I would much rather reclaim. I prefer that moral self-restraint, so beautifully expressed by the poet, when he represents Neptune as allaying the wild waters, instead of rebuking the winds which had put them in a roar,—

'Quos ego — sed motos præstat componere fluctus.'"

Mr. Buxton replied, and fearlessly attacked the Government for its vacillating conduct. He read over the resolutions of the year before, which he justly denominated "a distinct pledge given by Government, that the condition of the slave population should be ameliorated." Quoting also Mr. Canning's words, that "if the colonial legislatures would not consent to these ameliorations,—if any resistance should be manifested to the expressed and declared wish of Parliament, any resistance which should partake, not of reason, but of contumacy,—it would create a case upon which His Majesty's Government would not hesitate to come down to Parliament for counsel."

"Now," said Mr. Buxton, "If this full and comprehensive pledge, this engagement given as to *all* the colonies, is to be frittered down, at present at least, to a single island; if the ad-

vantages promised are to be granted indeed to the 30,000 slaves in Trinidad, but withheld from the 350,000 in Jamaica, and the 70,000 in Barbadoes; if the '*earliest period*' is to be construed to mean some time, so undefined and distant that no man can say in what century it will take place; if our pledge to do this is now to mean no more than that we will suffer it to be done by the slow and gradual course of admonition and example — then I see no reason why ten centuries may not elapse before the negroes are freed from their present state of melancholy and deplorable thraldom. We who have engaged in the cause, we, at least, will be no parties to such a desertion of duty, to such a breach of faith.

"I well know," he added, "the difficult situation in which I stand. No man is more aware than I am of my inability to follow the brilliant and able speech which has just been delivered. But I have a duty to perform, and I will perform it. I know well what I incur by this. I know how I call down upon myself the violent animosity of an exasperated and most powerful party. I know how reproaches have rung in my ears since that pledge was given, and how they will ring with tenfold fury now that I call for its fulfilment. Let them ring! I will not purchase for myself a base indemnity with such a sting as this on my conscience: 'You ventured to agitate the question; a pledge was obtained; you were, therefore, to be considered the holder of that pledge to which the hopes of half a million of people were linked. And then, fearful of a little unpopularity, and confounded by the dazzling eloquence of the right honourable gentleman, you sat still, you held your peace, and were satisfied to see his pledge, in favour of a whole archipelago, reduced to a single island.'"*

He concluded his speech, in which he laid bare a series of acts of atrocious cruelty in the treatment of the negroes, by stating distinctly, "What I have now said I have said from a sense of public duty. I have no hostility to the planters. Compensation to the planter, emancipation to the children of the negro—these are my desires, this is the consummation, the just and glorious

* Hansard's Debates. New Series, vol. x. p. 1115.

consummation on which my hopes are planted, and to which, as long as I live, my most strenuous efforts shall be directed!" He was well supported by Dr. Lushington, Mr. Evans, and Mr. Wilberforce. The latter, who, as usual, was hopeful amidst discouragements, thus addresses him on the day after the debate: —

"My dear Friend, "Brompton Grove, March 17. 1824.

"It was quite a disappointment to me not to see you at the House to-day. There are points on which I shall be glad to confer with you. Meanwhile I am strongly urged by my feelings to express to you the solid satisfaction with which I take a *sober estimate* of the progress which, through the goodness of Providence, we have already made, and the good hopes which we may justly indulge as to the future. To find the two Houses of Parliament, each full of members to the brim, consulting about the interests and comforts of those who, not long ago, were scarcely rated above the level of ourang-outangs, is almost as sure an indication of our complete success ere long, as the streaks of morning light are of the fulness of meridian day. I hope I may live to congratulate you, even in this world, on the complete success of your generous labours; at all events, I trust humbly, that we may rejoice and triumph together in a better world, for we, my dear friend, may, more truly than the great historian, affirm that we are working for eternity. And our κτῆμα ἐς ἀεὶ will be enjoyed, I trust, in common with many, many of our poor black brethren, when all bondage and injustice, all sorrow and pain having ceased, love and truth, and mercy and peace and joy, shall be our everlasting portion. O, my friend, let us strive more and more earnestly for all that is right here, looking forward to these glorious prospects!"*

* The following lines, which, under the title of "A Portrait," have since been published among the poems of the Rev. T. Hankinson, were written in reference to Mr. Buxton's conduct at this period.

"I honour him, who stands in calm reliance,
Amid a senate's frown, and shrug and jeer;
Hurls in the scoffer's face his proud defiance,
And fearing no man, dares his God to fear;
Who spins no smooth harangue for statesman's ear
Of that misnam'd expediency; but he
Deems *that* expedient which is just and fair;—
Pronounces *that* most safe which ought to be.
And cries, "Let man have right, for God hath made him free!"

On the 1st of June a motion respecting the missionary Smith was brought forward by Mr. Brougham, in a brilliant speech of four hours' length, which produced a strong effect upon public feeling.

One remarkable circumstance by which the Demerara insurrection was distinguished, namely, the extraordinary forbearance of the rebel negroes, is thus mentioned by him: —

"The slaves," he said, "inflamed by false hopes of freedom, agitated by rumours, and irritated by the suspense and ignorance in which they were kept; exasperated by ancient as well as more recent wrongs (for a sale of fifty or sixty of them had just been announced, and they were about to be violently separated and dispersed), were satisfied with combining not to work, and thus making their managers repair to the town and ascertain the precise nature of the boon reported to have arrived from England. The calumniated minister had so far humanised his poor flock, his dangerous preaching had so enlightened them, the lessons of himself and his hated brethren had sunk so deep in their minds, that, by the testimony of the clergyman, and even of the overseers, the maxims of the Gospel of peace were upon their lips in the midst of rebellion, and restrained their hands when no other force was present to resist them. 'We will take no life,' said they, 'for our pastors have taught us not to take that which we cannot give,' a memorable peculiarity which drew from the truly pious minister* of the Established Church there the exclamation, 'that he shuddered to write that the planters were seeking the life of the man whose teaching had saved theirs.'"†

Sir James Mackintosh followed, and was succeeded by Dr. Lushington, Mr. Wilberforce, Mr. Williams, and Mr. Denman. The debate was closed by a powerful reply

* The clergyman here referred to was the Rev. Mr. Austin, whose conduct in this transaction caused his exile from Demerara, and drew from Sir James Mackintosh the emphatic declaration, "that he needed nothing but a larger and more elevated theatre, to place him among those who will be, in all ages, regarded by mankind as models for imitation, and objects of reverence."

† Hansard's Debates. New Series, vol. xi. p. 994.

from Mr. Brougham. This discussion, as had been predicted, changed the current of public opinion. The nation, which before had partaken of the consternation of the Government, began to awaken to the truth, and from henceforth the religious public in England was strongly enlisted on behalf of the oppressed missionaries and their persecuted followers; and this feeling soon increased into a detestation of that system, of which such intolerance was the natural fruit. On the 15th of June the subject was renewed in the House by Mr. Wilberforce, and a promise was wrested from the Government of extending the Order in Council to St. Lucia and Demerara, as well as Trinidad.

Mr. Buxton passed the autumn at Cromer Hall, recruiting his health, and at the same time strenuously exerting himself in procuring information which might assist the future conduct of the cause.

In the beginning of 1825 Mr. Wilberforce retired from Parliament. In a letter which he wrote to Mr. Buxton on the occasion, he says,—

"I should like you to be the person to move for a new writ for Bramber as my PARLIAMENTARY EXECUTOR. I can now only say, may God bless you and yours; bless you in public and private as a senator, and still more as a man. So wishes, so prays for you, and all that are most dear to you,

"Your ever sincere and affectionate friend,

"W. WILBERFORCE."

Mr. Buxton thus mentions this event:—

"London, Feb. 10. 1825.

"I went, on the night of my arrival, to Wilberforce. He insists on my moving the writ of abdication. I feel it just about the highest honour I could have; and yet it gives me unaffected pain, from a consciousness of my inability to be his successor. I must, however, labour hard, and try how far labour will supply his talents and reputation. I now begin to repent that I shot

so much and read so little during my long holiday,—and yet I did work pretty hard.

"Well, only *one* thing is absolutely necessary to do some good, and that is a pure and fervent determination to do my duty in private and in public.

"I can give you no information about our measures, but I have no other notion than that we shall eventually succeed."

T. F. Buxton, Esq., to a Friend.

"London, Feb. 24. 1825.

"I find I have got the character of being very rash and impetuous. In our Anti-slavery proceedings I have always been for vigorous measures. I thought our cause invincible in itself, and that it was always to be treated by us as if we had no distrust of its soundness; and, therefore, the maxim I quote in our deliberations is that of the navy in the last war, 'Always fight.' This is well known to our adversaries, and makes them bitter against me to the last point. I can well bear this."

In 1822 Mr. Wilberforce had mentioned in his diary that "the House was made up of West Indians, Government men, a few partisans, and a few sturdy Abolitionists — William Smith, Buxton, Butterworth, Evans, and myself." He, the great champion of the oppressed, had now retired, and during the three intervening years the very "few sturdy Abolitionists" had received but small accession to their numbers, though, it may be confessed, that the great ability and hearty zeal of Dr. Lushington, the varied talents of Mr. Brougham, Sir James Mackintosh, and Mr. Denman, in great measure compensated for their want of numerical strength.

With Dr. Lushington Mr. Buxton maintained, from the beginning to the end of the Anti-slavery struggle, a peculiarly close connection. "He has ever been," said Mr. Buxton, "as disinterested, as honest, as generous a supporter of our great cause as could be; and in private life a most kind and faithful friend, with no

other fault than too much zeal, and too much liberality." They had a perfect community of interest, of anxiety, and of counsel. Indeed, if any credit whatever is due to Mr. Buxton for his conduct of the Anti-Slavery campaign, an equal share must be awarded to Dr. Lushington; for every idea, and every plan, was originated and arranged between them. Important as was Dr. Lushington's parliamentary assistance, not one tenth part of his exertions for the cause ever met the public eye. It was in the long and anxious deliberations in which, day after day, he used to be engaged with Mr. Buxton, that the cause reaped the chief benefit of his great talents and far-sighted policy.

Another essential member of the Anti-slavery cabinet was Mr. Zachary Macaulay. The parliamentary leaders derived the utmost assistance from his matured judgment, and from those vast stores of information which were treasured up in his memory. He also was the editor of that important vehicle of information, the "Anti-slavery Reporter."

There are many who still remember Mr. Macaulay's stooping figure, his entangled utterance, and neglected dress; but within there dwelt the spirit of a hero and a heart glowing with love to God and man. From the moment of his embracing the Abolition cause till the day of his death, he flinched neither from toil nor privations, neither from obloquy nor persecution, but sacrificed himself, with the whole of his personal hopes, to advancing the cause of humanity. The privacy of his course was only chequered by occasional bursts of animosity from those who felt their defeat to be in a great measure owing to his silent but steady exertions. To labour and suffer without prospect of gain or applause, in the simple hope of alleviating the miseries of others, was the lot in

life that he cheerfully fulfilled. There may be a more graceful and more attractive career — can there be one of more solemn grandeur? Still, however, we may hope that posterity will grant him that just meed of honour, which, during his life, was denied him.

During the first four years of the Anti-slavery struggle, the leaders were chiefly employed in clearing the ground for future operations. Emancipation seemed far distant. They were therefore more occupied in investigating and bringing to light the evils of the present state of things, than in framing plans for that which they trusted would eventually succeed it.

In this endeavour great assistance was derived from the publication, in 1824, of the first part of Mr. James Stephen's 'Delineation of Slavery,' described in one of Mr. Macaulay's letters as "Stephen's mighty book which marks the hand of a giant." Mr. Stephen had been, as is well known, one of the leading opponents of the Slave-trade, and his success in enforcing the registration of slaves was of great importance, both in that struggle and in the one which succeeded it. His endeavour now was, to open the eyes of Parliament and the public to the real character of the system.

Early in 1825 Dr. Lushington exposed the unworthy treatment of the free people of colour in the West Indies, selecting, as a prominent instance, the cruel usage of Messrs. Lecesne and Escoffery.

In June of the same year Mr. Buxton brought before the House the case of Mr. Shrewsbury. This gentleman was a Wesleyan missionary in Barbadoes, "in whose conduct," as Mr. Canning expressly stated in the House, "there did not appear the slightest ground of blame or suspicion." But the planters were exasperated against him for his exertions in the instruction of the Negroes

and free people of colour: and it was also charged against him, that he had actually corresponded with Mr. Buxton! "Though," said the latter in the House, "I never received from or wrote to him a single letter; *nor did I know that such a man existed* till I happened to take up a newspaper, and there read with some astonishment, that he was going to be hanged for corresponding with me!"

On two successive Sundays in October, 1823, the doors of Mr. Shrewsbury's chapel were stormed during the hours of divine worship by a furious mob, who did not, however, at that time proceed to actual outrage; but a day or two afterwards a "Proclamation" was published, calling on all the "true lovers of religion" to assemble in arms on the following Sunday, and pull down the chapel and mission-house. This they accordingly did: but Mr. Shrewsbury had concealed himself in the house of a clergyman, "whose kindness," said Mr. Buxton, "then displayed to a poor friendless missionary, hunted for his life by an infuriated mob, I will now return—by concealing his name, knowing that if I were to mention it with approbation, the fate of Mr. Austin, of Demerara, would await him."

"There is," he continued, "in this transaction at Barbadoes, as there was also in that of Demerara, that which of all things I hate the most — a rank, fierce, furious spirit of religious bigotry, dominant throughout the island, and pursuing its victims, the one to death and the other to exile. But there is that also which does honour to human nature, and casts a glory round the Church to which I belong, and which I prefer to all others — namely, that these poor victims, Dissenters, Missionaries, Methodists, though they were, found their best friends and their most faithful advisers in the ranks of our clergy. Mr. Austin, for one of the most noble acts which have been done in our days, is a ruined and banished man; and I conceal the name of

the other, in order to spare him—the honours, indeed, but—the sufferings of martyrdom." *

He concluded, not by demanding any punishment on the guilty parties, but simply by moving that they should be compelled to rebuild the chapel. The House, however, would only join him in a vote of censure upon those concerned in the crime.

In his reply at the end of the debate he said,—

"I wish it to be distinctly understood that it is my firm and unalterable resolution to devote all my life and my efforts to advocating the cause of the slaves; and that I will persist in that course, in spite of opposition, unpopularity, obloquy, or falsehood."

To a Friend.

"June 24. 1825.

"I have now to tell you the events of yesterday. At first the usual fate of West India questions attended me — a great indisposition to hear anything; but I gradually won their attention, and gave my narrative fully. No very lively interest betrayed itself, but they listened like persons who wished to learn. * * * I am prepared for a poor report in the newspapers, for even the reporters sympathise with the House in detestation of slavery questions; and though Lushington made a most capital speech last week on the Jamaica business, it was only reported in a very superficial manner."

In the recess of this year we find him attending Anti-slavery meetings at Norwich and elsewhere; and employed in arranging and settling the division of labour with his coadjutors.

He tells Mr. Brougham: —

"Cromer Hall, Sept. 8.

"Lushington, Macaulay, and I, have now for several days met directly after breakfast, and employed ourselves in discussing various questions relative to slavery. I now send you the results."

* Hansard. New Series, vol. xiii. p. 1285.

After detailing the projects for the ensuing session, he adds,—

"Macaulay leaves me to-morrow; Lushington stays for several weeks; he and I mean to continue our morning meetings."

Sir James Mackintosh to T. Fowell Buxton, Esq.

"Dear Buxton, "Harrowgate, Sept. 25. 1825.

"I received your plan of campaign, but, as I am going to Brougham's house in Westmoreland, I reserve my observations on it till I have a conference with him. My health is now so much better than ever I expected it would be, that I can with more than usual confidence undertake to perform any task allotted me to the best of my abilities. * * * The two great measures are, the Bill to enforce and generalise the Order in Council, and the particular plan of Emancipation. I almost think that both are too much for one session. * * * I hope to be in London in four weeks, where I shall wish to hear from you.

"Ever yours faithfully,
"J. MACKINTOSH."

In the beginning of the session of 1826, Mr. Buxton mentions that two meetings about slavery had been already held; and he adds,—

"We are determined to bring forward, without delay, two or three enormities, as a prelude to the Bill for coercing the Colonial Assemblies. The Berbice Papers * and the insurrection in Jamaica have been selected."

"February 23.

"I saw Canning yesterday: he was very friendly; intimated that the Government meant to do something; but as he had refused to tell the West Indians what that something was, he

* The Berbice Papers were the official statement by the Fiscal of the complaints made to him by the Negroes against their masters, and his judgments thereon. The cruelties thus brought to light were of the most revolting character. Abundant extracts from these papers will be found in the Anti-Slavery Reporter for October 31. 1825, vol. i.

also refused to tell us. On Tuesday next I bring forward the London Petition, and we shall have a warm discussion. On Thursday we have Denman's motion on the Jamaica Trials — another fierce discussion; and these will probably be followed by a host of other questions."

Mr. Buxton presented the London petition against slavery on the 1st of March: it was signed by 72,000 persons. In his speech he praised the Order in Council enforced in Trinidad, and again pointed out how ineffectual had been the recommendations of the Government to the legislatures of the other islands. "I am anxious," he declared, "to say nothing that can give offence to any party; but it is my duty broadly to declare my confirmed and deliberate conviction, that this House must do the work themselves, or suffer it to be altogether abandoned." *

He thus states the result of this debate: —

"March 2.

"Last night we had our debate. Canning was not satisfactory: he preferred *to give the West Indians another year*, and then to legislate. We are going to have another debate to-night. I am as tired as a person well can be."

The next evening came on Mr. Denman's motion. He took the case of eight of the Negroes executed after the Jamaica insurrection of 1823; and demanded a vote of censure on those concerned in condemning them. How forced and illegal some of the proceedings had been, will be seen from the following brief extract from Mr. Buxton's speech: —

"Next came the evidence of the constable. He was asked, whether he had not found guns amongst the insurgents? His answer was, that he had not; but he was *shown a place where he was told guns had been.* Then he was asked, if he had not

* Hansard's Debates. New Series, vol. xiv. p. 968.

found large quantities of ammunition? And he answered that he had not. Had he not found a number of bayonets? 'No,' said the constable, 'but I was shown *a basket, in which I was told a great number of bayonets had been!*' Such was the evidence on which these men were hanged."

The House resolved, that it would be inexpedient to impeach the sentences which had been passed; but "that further proof had been afforded by them of the evils inseparably attendant upon a state of slavery."

After the close of this session, there was a pause in the operations of the Abolitionists. As Mr. Canning had positively declared that the Government would give the colonial legislature another year's trial, before it would take the task of amelioration into its own hands, nothing remained for the Anti-slavery party but to await the expiration of that period.

CHAPTER X.

1822—1826.

CROMER HALL. — SHOOTING. — A COURTEOUS POACHER. — THE SPORTING PROFESSOR. — MR. BUXTON'S DELIGHT IN HORSES. — HIS INFLUENCE OVER THE YOUNG. — MAXIMS. — LETTER TO A NEPHEW. — HIS LOVE OF A MANLY CHARACTER. — HIS GENTLENESS. — SHIPWRECK AT CROMER. — PERILOUS EXPLOIT. — HIS RELIGIOUS INFLUENCE. — KINDNESS TO THE POOR. — LETTER ON STYLE. — CORRESPONDENCE. — MARTIN'S ACT. — CORRESPONDENCE. — LETTER TO A CLERGYMAN ON HIS NEW HOUSE.

For the last few years Mr. Buxton had generally resided with his family in the spring and summer near the House of Commons, spending, however, much of his time at Ham House, Mr. S. Gurney's seat in Essex, and with Mr. S. Hoare, at Hampstead. Amid the turmoil of his parliamentary life, these country visits were of great advantage to him; as affording him quiet hours for study, and the opportunity of taking those solitary rambles which were the times of his deepest reflection.

In 1825 he took a house in Devonshire Street, Portland Place; but as long as he remained in Parliament, a day of leisure generally found him and Mrs. Buxton either at Hampstead or at Ham House. Mr. and Mrs. S. Hoare also regularly passed the months of September and October at Cromer, and for the first year or two Cromer Hall was held in common by the two families.

After the busy summer in London, Mr. Buxton highly relished the retirement and recreation which this place afforded. He never lost his taste for shooting, and had the reputation of being a first-rate shot.

Great pains were taken by him in the management of his game, especially in rearing his pheasants, which used to feed in very large numbers on the lawn, immediately under the drawing-room windows; yet he was scarcely ever annoyed by poachers. On one occasion, however, while riding along the road, he saw a young man, in an adjoining field, fire at a partridge and kill it. He opened the gate, and, riding up to the youth, who seemed not a little startled at the apparition, said to him in a somewhat abrupt tone, "Now, Sir, allow me to ask you three questions: First, what is your name and residence; secondly, where is your licence; and, thirdly, who gave you leave to shoot over my ground?" The young man made a low bow, and answered in the blandest manner: "My name, Sir, is ——. As to your two other questions, with your leave, I'll waive them. Sir, I wish you a very good morning;" and so saying, to Mr. Buxton's no small amusement, he slipped out of the field.

Once, when he was staying with Mr. Coke at Holkham, a well-known Professor was also one of the visitors. The venerable historian had never had a gun in his hand, but on this occasion Mr. Coke persuaded him to accompany the shooting-party; care, however, was taken to place him at a corner of the covert, where it was thought the other sportsmen would be out of his reach. When the rest of the party came up to the spot where he was standing, Mr. Coke said to him, "Well, what sport? You have been firing pretty often!" "Hush!" said the Professor, "there it goes again;" and he was just raising his gun to his shoulder, when a man walked very quietly from the bushes about seventy yards in front of him. It was one of the beaters who had been set to stop the pheasants, and his leather gaiters, dimly seen

through the bushes, had been mistaken for a hare by the Professor, who, much surprised by its tenacity of life, had been firing at it whenever he saw it move. "But," said Mr. Buxton, "the man had never discovered that the Professor was shooting at him!"

No Arab ever took a greater delight in horses than Mr. Buxton; and several of his favourites, especially John Bull, Abraham, and Jeremie, were renowned for their strength and beauty. He was considered a very good judge, and never hesitated to give any price, in order to render his stud more complete. Of dogs, too, he was very fond; one of his pets came into his possession in a singular manner. He was standing at the door of the House of Commons, talking to a friend, when a beautiful black and tan terrier rushed between them, and immediately began barking furiously at Mr. Joseph Pease, who was speaking. All the members jumped up, shouting and laughing, while the officers of the House chased the dog round and round, till at last he took refuge with Mr. Buxton; who, as he could find no traces of an owner, carried him home. He proved to be quite an original. One of his whims was, that he would never go into the kitchen, nor yet into a poor man's cottage; but he formed a habit of visiting by himself at the country-houses in the neighbourhood of Cromer, and his refined manners and intelligence made 'Speaker' a welcome guest, wherever he pleased to go.

Once at rest in the retirement of Cromer Hall, Mr. Buxton began to lose the grave and care-worn expression which usually marked his countenance while under the heavy pressure of business in town: not that the autumn was wholly spent in recreation; on the contrary, his studies, chiefly bearing on public objects, were steadily pursued. He generally passed the latter part of his

evenings alone in his study, frequently remaining there to a very late hour.

Cromer Hall was often filled with an easy social party, but he had no wish to extend his circle much beyond his own relatives, a select few of his parliamentary friends, and the families in the immediate neighbourhood. He had no taste for society of a more formal, and, as he thought, insipid character; nor did he find much pleasure in conversation, though at table he would usually enliven the party by his playfulness of manner, and by his store of anecdotes, which he could tell with much force and spirit. He took great pains in providing amusements for the younger members of the circle. There is much picturesque scenery around Cromer, and large parties were often collected for excursions, to Sheringham, one of the most beautiful spots in all the eastern counties, to the wooded dells of Felbrigg and Runton, or to the rough heath-ground by the Black Beacon. At home, also, he was energetic in setting on foot amusements for his young friends, such as acting charades, Christmas games, or amusing reading. At one time a family newspaper was started, which appeared once a-week; and great was the interest excited in reading the various contributions, grave and gay, which every one sent in. Sometimes he would give a list of poets, from whose works the juvenile part of the circle were invited to learn by heart: and examinations were held, with valuable books as prizes. Other schemes of the same kind were frequently set on foot, all intended to draw out the mind, and spur it to exertion. His thoughtfulness for others, combined with an unswerving strictness, gave him a remarkable influence over those around him; it has been thus referred to by one who was a frequent guest at Cromer Hall.

"I wish I could describe the impression made upon me by the extraordinary power of interesting and stimulating others, which was possessed by Sir Fowell Buxton some thirty years ago. In my own case it was like having powers of thinking, powers of feeling, and, above all, the love of true poetry, suddenly aroused within me, which, though I may have possessed them before, had been till then unused. From Locke on the Human Understanding to 'William of Deloraine, good at need,' *he* woke up in me the sleeping principle of taste; and in giving me such objects of pursuit, has added immeasurably to the happiness of my life."

He more than once recommended Locke on the Understanding to the perusal of young people, as a useful work in establishing the habit of receiving truth with impartiality. "That," he said, "is one of the most important things to impress on the minds of children, habitually to seek for *the truth*, whether for or against our previous opinions and interests." He certainly illustrated his own maxim, for he was from his youth up remarkably free from prejudices, and ready to give ear to whatever could be adduced against his own views.

He seems to have had some idea of publishing a little work, to be called "Maxims for the Young." The following extracts from the rough memoranda for this work, throw light, not only upon his views as to education, but also on his own character:—

HINTS FOR MAXIMS FOR THE YOUNG.

"Mankind in general mistake difficulties for impossibilities. That is the difference between those who effect, and those who do not.

"People of weak judgment are the most timid, as horses half blind are most apt to start.

"Burke, in a letter to Miss Shackleton, says:—

"'Thus much in favour of activity and occupation, that the more one has to do, the more one is capable of doing, even beyond our direct task.'

"Plato, 'better to err in acts, than principles.'

"Idleness the greatest prodigality.

"Two kinds of idleness,—a listless and an active.

"If industrious, we should direct our efforts to right ends.

"Possibly it may require as much (industry) to be best billiard-player as to be senior wrangler.

"The endowments of nature we cannot command, but we can cultivate those given.

"My experience, that men of great talents are apt to do nothing for want of vigour.

"Vigour, — energy, — resolution, — firmness of purpose, — these carry the day.

"Is there one whom difficulties dishearten, — who bends to the storm?—He will do little. Is there one who *will* conquer? —That kind of man never fails.

"Let it be your first study to teach the world that you are not wood and straw—*some iron in you.*

"Let men know that what you say you will do; that your decision made is final, — no wavering; that, once resolved, you are not to be allured or intimidated.

"Acquire and maintain that character."

* * * * *

"*Eloquence* — the most useful talent; one to be acquired, or improved; all the great speakers bad at first. — Huskisson. — How to be acquired.

"Write your speeches,—no inspiration.

"Labour to put your thoughts in the clearest view.

"A bold, decided outline.

"Read 'multum, non multa,— homo unius libri.'

"'Learn by heart everything that strikes you.'—FOX.

"Thus ends my lecture; nineteen out of twenty become good or bad as they choose to make themselves.

"The most important part of your education is that which you now give yourselves."

The same value for strength of character is displayed in the following mention in his papers of a young member of his circle about to enter on life.

"He is now at a very critical period of life. In a few months he will leave home, and his fate and fortunes will mainly depend on the degree of *vigour of character* which he will then display. Deliver him, O Lord, from fading resolutions, from feeble and unstable purposes, from an idle wavering mind, and from habits of self-indulgence. Give him firmness of purpose, enable him to take hold on his object with a vigorous and manly grasp. Give him industry and perseverance; a clear judgment to resolve, and, once resolved, an inflexible determination. But let this strength of character be based on better than human foundations; let it be given by thee; limited, corrected, kept within bounds by thee. Oh, that he may be able in after life to ascribe his success to the Lord, and to say, with David, 'It is God that girdeth me with strength, and maketh my way perfect.'"

He writes to his nephew, Mr. Hoare's eldest son, who had been disappointed in the scholarship examination at Trinity:—

"Hampstead, April 21. 1827.

"I need not, I suppose, say that I have my full share of this disappointment; but that is not the subject on which I am going to write. All my advice is crowded into this single sentence, 'Tu ne cede malis, sed contrà audentior ito.'

"This mortification is a test which will try your character. If that character be feeble, the disappointment will weigh upon your spirits; you will relax your exertions, and begin to despond and to be idle. That is the general character of men; they can do very well when the breeze is in their favour, but they are cowed by the storm. If your character is vigorous and masculine, you will gather strength from this defeat, and encouragement from this disappointment. If fortune will not give you her favours, you will tear them from her by force; and if you were my own son, as you very nearly are, I would rather you should have failed, and then exhibited this determination, than that everything should have gone smoothly. I like your letter much; it breathes a portion of this unconquerable spirit, which

is worth all the Latin, Greek, and Logarithms in the world, and all the prizes which ever were given. Now, then, is the time; be a man and avenge yourself at the next examination. If you are sick at heart, and can't sleep, and laugh, and defy malicious fortune, then you may make a very decent banker, but there is an end of you. If you can summon up courage for the occasion, and pluck from this failure the materials for future success, then the loss of the scholarship may be a gain for life."*

He could not bear the stream of life to run shallow: he liked its tide to be full and strong, longing to make others share in his own impetus and force of character. This delight in manliness of mind led him to set his face firmly against all listlessness in amusement as well as in study. He was much averse to confining boys too closely to the school-room, and was always ready to propose holidays; but then he took care to provide shooting, cricketing, or some other active diversion for them. At the same time he was very strict in enforcing his orders. The tendency of his mind was to assume command in a decisive and even somewhat stern manner; but this was corrected by the extreme tenderness of his heart, which led him in all things to weigh carefully the feelings and pleasures of those under his authority. "I know," he says in a letter from Cromer Hall, "that I am often harsh, and violent, and very disagreeable, but I sincerely think that I do not know a person less inclined than I am to *curb the deep desires* of others, or to force my views down their throats. I believe I am a true friend to liberty of feeling, and I think it high arrogance in one human being to pretend to dictate to another what is for that other's happiness." His forbearance

* This advice was not neglected by his nephew. He gained his scholarship the next time; was a high wrangler, and in the first class of the Tripos.

was continually shown in the turmoil of public life. In transacting business, on committees, and in the conduct of difficult affairs with those of widely diverging opinions, his subjugation of temper and his gentle persuasive manner were remarkable. One of his most faithful supporters at Weymouth thus writes of him: —

"It must be well known to every one conversant with contested elections, that nothing can try the temper more, from the unwarrantable liberty of the press, and the unfair means, both in word and deed, used on such occasions; yet though I have followed the late Sir Fowell through all his hard, long, and severe contests in this borough, I never knew him *once* lose his temper, *once* give a harsh reply, or use an unkind word to any one; nothing ever disturbed the 'even tenor of his way.'"

Before the establishment of the floating light off Happisburgh, wrecks were very frequent on the Cromer coast. On any rumour of a vessel in danger, Mr. Buxton and Mr. Hoare used to be among the first on the shore, not merely to urge and direct the efforts of others, but to give their personal aid. On one of these occasions Mr. Buxton himself ran considerable risk in the terrible storm of the 31st of October, 1823, which was long remembered on the Norfolk coast. About twelve o'clock a collier brig, "The Duchess of Cumberland," ran upon the rocks off the Cromer light-house. The life-boat was immediately brought out, but so tremendous was the sea that no persuasion could induce the fishermen to put off. Once when a wave ran up the beach and floated her, Mr. Buxton, hoping to spur them on by his example, sprang in, shouting to them to follow him, but without effect. Captain Manby's gun was repeatedly fired, but the line fell short of the vessel, in which nine sailors were seen lashed to the shrouds. At length a huge sea burst over her, and she went to pieces,

blackening the waters with her cargo of coal. For an instant the spectators looked on in silent awe.—"Poor dear hearts, they're all gone now!" exclaimed an old fisherman; but at that moment Mr. Buxton thought he saw one of them borne upon the top of a wave. Without waiting for a rope, he at once dashed into the surf—caught the man—flung himself upon him, and struggled against the strong drawback of the retiring billow, until others could reach him, and he was dragged to land with his rescued mariner, and carried up the cliff in a state of utter exhaustion. The deed was considered by those on shore to have been one of extreme peril and daring.* He said himself that he felt the waves play with him as he could play with an orange.

A prominent feature of his character was the careful employment of his influence in promoting the spread of religion around him. On the Sunday evenings his large dining-room was usually filled with a miscellaneous audience, many of the fishermen and other neighbours collecting round him as well as his own household; and very impressive were his brief but well digested comments on the passage of Scripture he had read. His rule was to say nothing unless he had something really weighty to say. His manner of speaking showed that he was not only a teacher, but a learner; he appeared to drink in the truth, and to appropriate it with an earnestness which could not but excite a corresponding feeling in those who heard him. His sentiments, with regard to the study of the Scriptures, are thus expressed: —

"Undoubtedly it is good to read the Bible; it is well to read it occasionally; and if we do no more than take a super-

* See the Fisherman's Friendly Visitor, March, 1845.

ficial view of it, and just snatch a few fragments of truth from it, even this is better than its utter neglect.

"But this is not the way to gather from the Sacred Word those treasures of knowledge which it will yield. We must not read it, but study it; we must not cast a hasty glance upon it, but meditate upon it deeply with fixed attention, with full purpose of heart, with all the energy of our minds, if we desire to become masters of the treasures of revelation; and I am sure that Scripture thus diligently studied, read, marked, learned, and inwardly digested, and read, too, with prayer for the influence of the Holy Spirit, will furnish us with new light, open to us new views, and will appear to us in itself of a new character, adorned with a variety of beauties, with an emphasis of expression, with a power and a vigour and an appropriateness to our own needs, with a harvest of divine instruction and cogent truth never yielded to its careless cultivation. I have known men, and men of good understanding, who have been induced to read the Bible, and who have protested that they could make nothing of it, that they could not comprehend it;—no wonder; it is a sealed book to those who neither ask nor receive the Holy Spirit.

"An astronomer looks at the face of the heavens through a telescope, spangled with stars and planets, and sees an harmony, an order, a profuse display of power and wisdom. An ordinary man surveys the same sky with the naked eye, and observes nothing of all this; he has not the instrument; he wants the telescope which would reveal the wonders of the heavens to him. And so it is in reading the Bible; if a man looks at it with naked unassisted reason, he sees little and learns nothing; he wants the instrument, the Holy Spirit, to guide his inquiries, to enlighten his understanding, to touch his heart.

"But if some read it and learn nothing, others read it and learn but little. They begin without prayer, and they end without meditation. They read, but they do not inwardly digest; while others embrace its truths, seize and secure its treasures, and, to use the figure of Scripture, receive the engrafted word which is able to save their souls."

Mr. Buxton and Mr. Hoare had taken much pains in establishing branches of the Bible and Missionary Socie-

ties at Cromer, and from that time they made a point of attending and taking a part in the annual meetings. Only on one occasion was Mr. Hoare absent from them up to the time of his death — a period of twenty-five years; and Mr. Buxton was scarcely less regular. In every way he strove to promote the well-being of his poorer neighbours: their sufferings touched him to the quick, and great was his anxiety to relieve them. He would take pains also to gratify them in small things as well as to benefit them in greater matters. "It is a cruel thing," he once said, "for the poor labourer to be obliged to part with all his pig, after nourishing it as a daughter and letting it lie in his bosom. When they ask me to buy a bit, I buy two — one for myself, the other for them: they are so grateful and so pleased." Proofs that he was popular among them were often given. Having gone one day to speak to a friend at the Magistrates' meeting, in coming out he was surrounded by a crowd of people, one of whom said to him, "I hope, sir, you will attend the meeting to-day." "No, I do not understand magistrates' business." "Yes, sir," answered a man, "*you* are the poor man's magistrate."

The following letters, written between 1822 and 1826, may find a place here.

To Mrs. Buxton.

"March 30. 1822.

"I have the satisfaction to find that Government have finally consented to grant pensions to the wives of insane officers; and really if I do nothing but this in Parliament I shall not think my time or labour or money misspent; for the effect will be to render many a poor family comfortable and easy. On the other hand, I have the great dissatisfaction of finding great impediments with regard to the Prison Bill. However, I feel comfortable,

and am going to dine with the Duke of Gloucester to-day. John Ribbons is much to blame in not going to church, and must do it. He must not kill a rook on any consideration. I trust they will enjoy their matrimonial life; and I feel quite vexed at the idea of their being molested; in short, he must kill nothing but vermin."

To a Friend.

"London, April 16. 1823.

"I will take an early opportunity of moving for the account of the stations, and for the number of lives saved by the use of Captain Manby's apparatus; but the purpose of my writing at present is of a different nature. You say 'Pathos is not, in any sense, in my composition,' and you intimated in our conversation last Sunday, that you felt fit for the drudgery of stating facts, but not possessed of the art of giving to your statements entertainment and interest. Now, this is utterly and without reserve untrue. The fact is, that all persons, if they set about it aright, have the capacity of conveying their feelings to others. * * * Honestly speaking, however, I do think there is a certain degree of languor and want of vivacity in your studied productions; and I am sure I know the cause. You imagine, when you appear before the public, that you must appear in full dress, correct to a nicety—precise to a hair; and that artless, native naïveté, and undressed good humour, are unbefitting so solemn an occasion as an address to the public: in all which you are eminently deceived. You are of opinion that the public is so sagacious a creature as to require only bare facts; that he wants no more ornament or entertainment than a mathematician. Now, believe me, the public neither can or will receive into his obtuse understanding anything which is not conveyed through the medium of his imagination or his feelings; and if you want to move him you must address yourself to those only openings through which he is assailable. All the observations I have made in life—all the persons who have succeeded, and all those who have failed, furnish proofs of this. I will, however, only give you one. Dr. Lawrence, a man of great learning and talents, used to make speeches in the House, admirable for their facts, but to which no man ever attended except Fox: he was always seen sitting in the attitude of deep attention; and when asked the

reason, he said, 'Because I mean to speak this speech over again.' He actually did so; and those facts, which from Dr. Lawrence were unbearably heavy, moved and delighted the House from Fox, and insured certain and silent attention from all. Why? Because Dr. L. thought with you, and Fox had the good fortune to agree with me!

"Now, then, the application of all this. You ought to study the art of composition—the means of conveying to the world your own views and feelings. I am sure, from your habits of research, and your literary powers and opportunities, *you may do a great deal of good;* but you are bound to do your best to effect that object, in the way by which alone it can be accomplished—by *tickling the fancy* of the public.

* * * * *

"First, I should advise you in writing to put down the native, gay effusions of your own mind; and to avoid destroying their effect by a cold, correct emendation.

"Secondly, I would advise you to study composition;—'but where?' In Cicero, in Quinctilian, in Chesterfield's Letters (you will smile at the assembly), in the three papers on the Speech of Demosthenes in the Edinburgh Review, in South's Sermons, Junius's Letters, and the Spectator. Imbibe the spirit of these, and I will venture to assert that the public will feel as you feel, and respond to any appeal you make to them."

John Henry North, Esq., to T. Fowell Buxton, Esq.

"My dear Buxton, "Barmouth, Sept. 1. 1823.

"I have at length sat down to perform a lawyer's duty, to explain things inexplicable; *to wit,* why I have not written to you before, or why I am writing to you now, or why I am writing to you from this place. When the circuit ended, and left me at liberty to think of recreation, I embarked myself, my wife, a gig and horse, and, without other incumbrance or accommodation, have been moving about in broken weather and on mountain roads, till I found a sheltering-place here. Here, too, I have had the good fortune to meet with your venerable friend Mr. Wilberforce. To-day I had the pleasure of walking with him for half an hour, when he spoke of you with all the warmth

and affection that I anticipated. It quite delights me to receive the unvarying testimony which comes to me from all quarters of your well-earned reputation; and I enjoyed in a peculiar manner the high tribute which he paid you, because I know you are considered as his natural successor in the House of Commons. You have a boldness, spirit, and intrepidity that fit you for rougher warfare than he ever ventured to engage in; and public opinion, more powerful and enlightened now than in his time, will support you in attempting the great objects you have in view by more direct and expeditious methods than it would have been wise in him to adopt. Yes, Buxton, I do hope that we shall labour together yet in rooting out the Slave Trade in every quarter of the globe; in improving or perfecting the Criminal Law of England, and in emancipating, educating, and civilising my unfortunate countrymen.

"I suppose you have heard that I am an Orangeman, and that my health is drunk next after the Protestant ascendancy; but my opinions on the state of Ireland, and the policy it requires, remain unchanged. Lord Wellesley and Plunket have made sad work of it.

"When I tell you that twenty miles a day is the utmost that I can impel my horse, you will admit the impracticability of my crossing the island to Norfolk. I wish you had some of my roving disposition, or that there was good shooting on the marshes of Wales, and we might yet spend three or four days pleasantly together. Of our old friends I have no news. Strong you see from time to time in London. Stock is Stock; everything else alters, but he remains immoveable. He is unchanged too in his friendships, and feels the same warm regard for you and me that he ever felt. Wray is a Senior Fellow, and surprised the college by the excellence of his fellowship examinations. Robinson has married and accepted a living.

"I do not know with what face I can ask you to write to me, but one can be very impudent upon paper. * * * We have a friend here, the most amiable of men — a Mr. M'Ghee, a young clergyman. He is quite devoted to religion; and his views coincide entirely with what I believe to be yours. In the pulpit he is nearly the most eloquent preacher I ever heard. He is a friend of Mr. Wilberforce, who came here at his suggestion. If he should ever have an opportunity of seeing you, let this letter

be an introduction to him. My dear Buxton, may God bless you and your dear family, and my dear friend Mrs. Buxton, and long preserve you to the cause of humanity, patriotism, and religion!

"Your ever affectionate friend,
"JOHN HENRY NORTH."

Mr. Wilberforce writes at the same period: —

"My dear Buxton, "Barmouth, Sept. 3. 1823.

"Oh, how much I wish you and yours were all at this place! If you have any passion for rocks and mountains, here it might be gratified to the utmost of your desires. And there is another, and, to your friendly heart, I know a still more powerful attraction, in the person of Mr. North, the Irish barrister, who is staying here with his lady (the sister of Leslie Forster) for a short time. I own I had formed a very different idea of his exterior and manners. Your Irish man of genius commonly has somewhat volcanic about him; flash and fertility, and now and then a puff of smoke too, though often also with fine coruscations and aspirations of flame and starry scintillations; but North's manner is so quiet, and soft, and insinuating, that I should never have guessed him to be an Irishman; you cannot hear him converse, even for a few minutes, without conceiving both respect and regard for him.

* * * * * *

"My dear friend, I don't like to conclude without one serious word. Indeed, were I to do so, my letter would be a very unfaithful picture of my mind, and a letter to a friend ought to be quite a copy of it; for my most affectionate thoughts and feelings about you and yours are serious, far above the region of levities and frivolities. May it please God, my dear friend, to bless you with a long course of usefulness, and honour, and comfort; and may you and I, and all that are most dear to us respectively, after having filled up our appointed course, according to the will of God, in his faith, and fear, and love, as redeemed and grateful purchases of the blood of Christ, be received into that world of peace, and love, and joy, where all will be holiness and happiness for evermore! So wishes, so prays,

"Your sincere and affectionate friend,
"W. WILBERFORCE."

T. F. Buxton, Esq., to a Friend.

"Feb. 24. 1825.

"We have had a most noble debate on Ireland. Burdett's and Canning's speeches were superlative. As an object of ambition, there is nothing to compare with such exertions; and there was a time when my bosom burned to achieve them; but that folly is defunct. After all they are but an object of ambition; they convey no reality of honour or of happiness. Falstaff and I are exactly of the same opinion on the subject of reputation. I shall speak as well as I can for usefulness, but not for fame; my serious opinion being, that good woodcock shooting is a preferable thing to glory."

"Feb. 25. 1825.

"Martin brought forward last night a new cruelty bill. Sir M. Ridley and another member opposed it, and I evidently saw that there was so much disposition to sneer at and make game of Martin, that the bears and dogs would suffer. Up I got, and when I found myself on my legs I asked myself this cutting question: — Have you any thing to say? 'Not a syllable,' was the answer from within; but necessity has no law; speak I must, and so I did. I began with challenging my share of the sneers and obloquy which had been cast on Martin. * * * We saved the bill, and all the dogs in England and bears in Christendom ought to howl us a congratulation."

To a gentleman who had asked for the secretaryship of a mining company for a friend, saying, "He had been a brave officer:" —

"April 17. 1825.

"You say he is brave; what has that to do with the mines? We don't want to fight the silver. Is he a vigorous, energetic dog, who will conquer difficulties? Is he a sharp, clear-headed man, who will not let us be cheated? Is he a man who will do business? Is he a good-tempered man, who will quarrel with nobody? You naval gentlemen think of nothing but courage, and think you have given the most special recommendation when you assure us that your friend is most perfectly ready to knock out his neighbour's brains; whereas we cowardly landsmen are not so fond of fighting, or fighting men."

To a friend who had remonstrated with him on speaking too strongly to a person in power on the subject of slavery—

"1826.

"I cannot leave London without acknowledging the receipt of your letter, though I am not very well.

"Our conversation has left a kind of double impression on my mind. I am glad I spoke out. I have made it a sacred rule to myself never to change my opinion of a man for whom I felt a friendship, without telling him to his face what I had to object against him. I have sometimes found myself altogether mistaken; and often, if not always, there has been something to be said on the other side which I had not anticipated. I am not aware that I ever had a quarrel with any one who had been my friend, and to this good rule I owe my preservation. I am glad, therefore, that I did not disguise what had been long and much on my mind. It is to me matter of amazement that any man of principle can materially differ with me on the subject of slavery. I wonder when I see an honest man who does not hate it as I do, who does not long for the opportunity of giving it a death-blow; and as I cannot believe that any change of circumstances could make me any thing but a favourer, and well-wisher, and encourager to those who were devoted to that duty, I am quite perplexed by finding that there are persons who look upon me, because thus engaged, with an unfriendly eye. —— is a man for whom I have ever entertained both respect and liking; I am therefore glad I hazarded the truth; but I am not glad that I did it in so strong a manner. I did not tell my whole mind. I wished to have said that I was very sorry I could not acknowledge many services he had rendered to our cause; but I wished to have said this in sorrow, not in anger: and if I left the impression that I had any feeling of enmity towards him I did myself great injustice."

To a Clergyman.

"My dear Friend, "Cromer Hall, Aug. 22. 1826.

"I very much wish you would come into Norfolk, for I really want to have a conversation with you; and it is odd enough that it is upon a business entirely yours, with which I

have no kind of concern. I remember two observations of yours, which, little as I might appear to heed them at the time, made a deep impression on me. The one was, 'I should very much like to be a country gentleman. I would not have the best horses, or dogs, or farms, in the county; but I would exert myself to improve the people who were under my influence. A country gentleman, thus employed, *totis viribus*, might accomplish a vast range of good.' The other was, when you said to one of your parishioners who was fond of music, 'I, too, love music; I hope to enjoy a great deal of it, but I will wait till I get to heaven.' Now, having had the use of these observations for some years, I feel bound to return them to you for your use and benefit, for it strikes me you want them just at this time. I hear you are going to build a house; no doubt you will do it with excellent taste; then it will require to be suitably furnished; then the grounds must be improved about it, and by that time your heart will be in it. I am sure that house will lead to your secularisation. It will melt you down towards an ordinary country parson; not the parson who loves his dinner and his claret, but rather towards that refined class of triflers, who exquisitely embellish houses and gardens, and who leave the minds and souls of their flocks to take care of themselves. You see I have scratched out 'into' and inserted 'towards,' because I am bound in truth to confess, that I am sure you will, under any circumstances, and in spite of all seductions, be an exemplary clergyman. You will have your schools, and your weekday services, and your sound, lively, evangelical doctrine in the pulpit; but what I mean to say is, that just so much of your affections as you give to your house, exactly so much will you withdraw from your parish.

"After all, the discharge of a man's duty, and, *à fortiori*, of a clergyman's duty, requires all the strength we can give it. The world, and the spirit of the world, are very insidious, and the older we grow the more inclined are we to think as others think, and act as others act; and more than once I have seen a person, who, as a youth, was single-eyed and single-hearted, and who, to any one who supposed he might glide into laxity of zeal, would have said 'Am I a dog?' in maturer age become, if not a lover of the vices of the world, at least a tolerator of its vanities. I speak here feelingly, for the world has worn away

much of the little zeal I ever had. 'What is the harm,' you will say, 'of a convenient house: what is the harm of a convenient house being elegant; of an elegant house being suitably furnished?' The same personage who insinuates this to you, said to me, 'Where is the harm of having a few dogs—those few very good? you preserve game—do it well—do it better than other people:' and so he stole away my heart from better things. I have more game and better horses and dogs than other people, but the same energy, disposed of in a different way, might have spread Bible and Missionary Societies over the Hundred of North Erpingham.

"All this applies to you, more than to any person I know. You have, by a singular dispensation of Providence, obtained a station of influence; you have a vigour and alacrity of mind with which few are gifted; upon no man's heart is 'the vanity of this life' more strongly stamped. You have a great, as far as my experience goes, an unequalled influence over those around you. These together constitute great power of doing good. The question is, shall you give it wholly to God, walking through life as one who really despises the indulgences on which others set their hearts, — acting fully up to your own creed, and the convictions of your better moments, — or will you give two-thirds of that power to God, and one-third of it to the world? Will you have your music here, or will you wait a few years for it? Old Wesley said, when called upon, according to the Act of Parliament, to give an account of his service of plate, in order to be taxed, 'I have five silver spoons; these are all I have, and all I mean to have, while my poor neighbours want bread.' That is the spirit which becomes a minister. Will you say, twenty years hence, to Death, when he pays you a visit, 'I built this house—by the confession of all men a parsonage in the purest taste; I selected these pictures: observe the luxuriance of the trees I planted; just do me the favour to notice the convenience of this library, and the beauty of the prospect from that window?' or will you say, 'I have spent my days in this homely habitation, where there is nothing for luxury to enjoy or taste to admire; but there is my parish, not a child there but can read the Bible, and loves it too: in every house there is prayer, in every heart there is an acknowledgment of Christ, and that he came into the world to

save sinners?' I do not mean to say, even if you build your house, that when that epoch arrives you will not be able to show a very good parish, as well as a very good parsonage; I only mean to say, that the house and the parish will be the inverse of each other, the better the house, the worse the parish. The less you surround yourself with accommodations, the less you conform yourself to the taste of the multitude, the more exclusively, and the more powerfully, you will do your own work.

"No man has a surplus of power: meaning by power—time, talents, money, influence. There is room for the exercise of all, and more than all, which the most affluent possesses. Perhaps one parish is enough for the full employment of this power; if not, the neighbourhood will take off the redundance; if not, there are three quarters of the world, which are heathen, and want his aid. There, at least, is full occupation for the wealth of his mind, and his purse. It is therefore, arithmetically true, that so much as he devotes to the secular object he withdraws from the spiritual. It is not more clear, that a man having a large hungry farm for his livelihood, and a garden for his recreation, that as much manure as he spreads on his garden, of so much he deprives his fields. He grows more flowers and less bread. But this is not all; it is not merely the quantum of his force which he thus wastes; that is the least part of his loss. He touches the world at one point, and the infection reaches him by the contact. If he resembles others in his house, why not in his table? why not in his society? why not in anything which is not positively wrong?

"Now every word of this sermon is inconsistent with my own practice; but never mind that; truth is truth, whoever speaks it.

"It may be a way—

> 'Out of this wreck to rise in,
> A sure and safe one, though thy master missed it.'

"But why do I write all this to you? solely because I have the highest opinion of you and your powers. I have watched your course now for many years with interest; and I am very desirous that the Rector of A—— should equal the Curate of B——. The objects of vulgar care, and the pursuits of vulgar ambition, are not for you. I hope to see in your parish an

example of what may be done by a clergyman having talents, income, influence, out of the common order. It just occurs to me that all this may be misapplied, that your house has not, and is not likely to have, a tittle of your affections. Be it so — then give this letter to your housemaid to light your fire with. But if you suspect that you want the friendly freedom of this hint, in the midst of your present prosperity, keep this as a memorial of the attachment of

"Yours, very truly,
"T. F. BUXTON."

CHAPTER XI.

1826, 1827.

THE MAURITIUS SLAVE TRADE. — MR. BYAM AND GENERAL HALL. — MR. BUXTON STUDIES AND UNDERTAKES THE QUESTION. — TOUCHING INCIDENT. — DEBATE. — COMMITTEE OF INQUIRY. — STORMY ELECTION AT WEYMOUTH. — LETTERS. — LABORIOUS INVESTIGATIONS. — FRIGHTFUL ATTACK OF ILLNESS. — UNEXPECTED RECOVERY.

THE year of trial, granted by the Government to the colonial legislatures, suspended during that time all anti-slavery proceedings. This interval was not thrown away — Mr. Buxton at once turned his whole mind to a new, though kindred question.

A few months previously he had received a visit from a gentleman of the name of Byam, who had been commissary-general of the police at the Mauritius, and had come home full of indignation at the abuses he had there witnessed. He asserted that the slave-trade was still prevailing in that island to a frightful extent; that the inhabitants and the authorities were alike implicated, and that the labouring slaves were treated with atrocious cruelty; the greater, because their loss could be so easily supplied.

The Mauritius* had not been ceded to England by France till 1810, which was three years after the abolition of the British slave-trade. It appeared that, partly owing to this circumstance, and partly to the

* The Mauritius was discovered in 1505, by Mascaregnas, a Portuguese. It received its name from that of the ship of Van Neck, a Dutchman, who first settled on it in 1595. The story of Paul and Virginia throws a romantic interest over this rich and beautiful island.

facilities afforded by the proximity of the African coast, the traffic had never been put down in those quarters, except during one or two brief intervals.

To these startling assertions Mr. Buxton could not yield immediate belief; still less could he refuse to investigate them. From Mr. Byam, and other individuals, especially General Hall (who had been a governor of the Mauritius), he obtained a large mass of documents, and after a long and minute study of their contents he came to the certain conviction that the charge was true. He was appalled by the greatness of the evil thus unveiled to him. It was no light matter, however, to begin a struggle with a foe so distant and inaccessible, and at first he shrank from the undertaking. But how could he know of such iniquities without standing up against them? At that time he little thought that in six years British slavery would be done away. He expected a far more lengthened contest; and, meanwhile, should these horrors be permitted to continue? — No! A year's leisure lay before him, and in conjunction with Dr. Lushington and others, he took the task in hand.

A plan of operation was soon laid, in accordance with which Mr. (now Sir) George Stephen, a stanch and hereditary abolitionist, took upon himself the labour, demanding no less skill than perseverance, of discovering and examining witnesses.* The first of these was Mrs. Byam's English maid-servant, who, while in the

* Mr. Buxton used to relate a conversation as having occurred at his own table in connection with this question, which much amused him. A gentleman who had been resident in the Mauritius, one day dining with him, laboured to set him right as to the condition of the slaves, assuring him that the blacks there were in fact the happiest people in the whole world. He finished by appealing to his wife. "Now, my dear, you saw Mr. T——'s slaves; do tell Mr. Buxton how happy they looked." "Well, yes," innocently replied the lady, "they were very happy, I'm sure:—only I used to think it *so* odd to see the black cooks chained to the fireplace!"

Mauritius, had done various little acts of kindness to the slaves.

One incident related by her powerfully affected Mr. Buxton. In the middle of the night preceding the departure of Mr. Byam's family from the island, she was awakened by a low voice calling to her from without; she rose, and was terrified at finding the whole court-yard filled with negroes. They beseechingly beckoned her to be still, and then, falling upon their knees, they implored her, as she was going to the country of Almighty God, to tell Him of their sufferings, and to entreat Him to send them relief.

On the 9th of May, 1826, Mr. Buxton brought the Mauritius question before Parliament. In the commencement of his speech he reminded the House that the traffic in slaves was by law a felony. "And yet," he continued: —

"I stand here to assert, that in a British colony, for the last fourteen years, except during General Hall's brief administration, the slave trade in all its horrors has existed: that it has been carried on to the extent of thousands, and tens of thousands; that, except upon one or two occasions, which I will advert to, there has been a regular, systematic, and increasing importation of slaves."

He then proceeded to prove this statement, adducing the evidence of one admiral and four naval captains, one general and three military officers, five high civil officers, and two out of the three governors of the island; and then, from calculations which he had very fully and accurately made, he proved every one of the eight distinct heads of accusation which he had brought forward. By a return of the number of the black population in the Seychelles, he showed that there was only

one alternative, either the slave-trade had been carried on, or every female in that group of islands must have been the mother of one hundred and eighty children.* He concluded his speech by sketching with a powerful hand the features of the trade which he was attacking (and let the reader, while perusing the following extract, remember that the same barbarities are going on at this very day, between the west coast of Africa and the Brazils).

After describing the system of capture, &c. he said,—

"The fourth step is the voyage, the horrors of which are beyond description. For example, the mode of packing. The hold of a slave-vessel is from two to four feet high. It is filled with as many human beings as it will contain. They are made to sit down with their heads between their knees; first, a line is placed close to the side of the vessel; then another line, and then the packer, armed with a heavy club, strikes at the feet of this last line, in order to make them press as closely as possible against those behind. And so the packing goes on, until, to use the expression of an eye-witness, 'they are wedged together in one mass of living corruption.' Then the stench is so dreadful that I am assured by an officer, that holding his head for a few moments over the air-hole was almost fatal to his life. Thus it is that—suffocating for want of air,—starving for want of food,—parched with thirst for want of water,—these poor creatures are compelled to perform a voyage of fourteen hundred miles. No wonder the mortality is dreadful!"

He obtained a select committee to inquire whether the slave-trade had or had not existed in the Mauritius. But its investigations were soon arrested by the dissolution of Parliament; and, in the beginning of June, Mr. Buxton found himself involved in a stormy election at Weymouth, which at that time, with the united borough of Melcombe Regis, returned four members. The non-

* Hansard, P. D. xv. p. 1030.

electors and the mob were in favour of the Tory candidates, and resorted to main force to prevent the polling of the Whig votes. Their plan was, with the aid of a large body of stout Portlanders, to obtain possession of the Town Hall, at the further extremity of which the booth was placed. No Whig voter reached the table without a violent struggle and very rough treatment. Some were delayed for hours, first by this means, and then by the objections urged by the lawyers; and so great was the success of all this, that on one day but six votes were polled. To remedy in some degree this evil, the mayor extended the hours of polling from 4 to 6 o'clock. This measure was extremely unpopular with the mobility of the place, who, of course, wished the election to last as many days as possible. It was rumoured that an attack on the Town Hall was in contemplation, and a strong body of cavalry was called into the town. The mob, however, were not dismayed. At 4 o'clock they assembled in great force, and suddenly rushed with a loud yell upon the door of the Town Hall. Some passed under the horses of the soldiers, others pressed between them; the ranks of the cavalry were broken, and the crowd poured in. At the same moment a great number of them ran over the leads of the houses adjoining the Town Hall, lowered themselves from the roof into its upper windows, and came tumbling into the Hall in crowds, rushing towards the polling-booth with loud shouts, and pressing back the gentlemen to the further end. Most of these scrambled out of the windows at once; a few kept their seats till they were almost suffocated by the mob, but were forced at last to jump from the windows into the arms of their friends below. Subsequently a large number of special con-

stables were sworn in and placed in the Hall. On two successive days the mob broke all their staves to pieces, and drove them out with great violence.

Mr. Buxton kept himself as clear as possible from these tumults: his own election was throughout secure, and he was personally highly popular. He is described as being received, even by the Tories, "with loud shouts of approbation; crowds came about him to shake hands; indeed," adds the letter, "he does not appear to have a person against him in the town."

The election lasted fifteen days, at the end of which he was at the head of the poll by a majority of sixty-nine; but the other Whig candidate was defeated, and three Tories came in.

To Samuel Hoare, Esq.

"Weymouth, June 16. 1826.

"This is the sixth day of polling, and there is every probability of six days more. The election is carried on with the utmost violence, and at *monstrous* expense. It is said that —— spends 1500*l.* a day; his party confess to 1000*l.* He has nine public houses open, where anybody, male or female, from town or country, is very welcome to eat and get drunk; and, the truth is, the whole town is drunk. I send you a copy of a letter which I wrote to the chairman of our committee yesterday, protesting against any such proceedings on our side."

The letter referred to is as follows: —

"My dear Sir, "Weymouth, June 15. 1826.

"I wish to repeat to you in writing, what I stated to you several times, and what I declared yesterday on the hustings; I will be no party to any expenses which are contrary to law. I will pay no part of the expense of opening houses. If any individual on his own responsibility does so, pray let him clearly understand that he will hereafter have no claim upon me. It is contrary to my principles to obtain any accession of strength by illegal means. I will not do it, and will not sanction it. I

request you will make this communication known to the candidates, the agents, and the committee."

To Joseph John Gurney, Esq.

(Who had offered to share in the expenses of the election.)

"Spitalfields, July 18. 1826.

"I was very much pleased with your letter. That kind of community of feeling and interest which subsists between us all is a rare, a good, and a most pleasant thing; and, under certain circumstances, I should have no kind of indisposition to be aided by you and the rest. My clear opinion, however, is, that there is no necessity for it at this time. I feel warranted in depriving my family of the sum my election will cost, considering the very peculiar situation in which the slave question, the Mauritius question, and the Suttee (Indian Widows) question stand. Without extravagantly overrating my own usefulness, I think it would be inconvenient for me to be out of Parliament just now. There are plenty of people with more talents, but a great lack of those who truly love a good cause for its own sake, and whom no price would detach from it; and so for this time I feel warranted in robbing my family. I therefore decline your most generous offer to assist in my election expenses; and I do so with many thanks, and with great pleasure that the offer was made.*

"I am very, very sorry I cannot join Wilberforce at Earlham; nothing prevents me except the Mauritius question, and that to him will be a pretty good reason.

"I shall not be at Cromer Hall till early in August, so despatch the Aylsham Bible Society without me; I am sick of public duties, and run away from them without scruple."

The rest of the year 1826 was chiefly employed in the laborious task of preparing Mauritian evidence for the ensuing session. For this purpose Mr. G. Stephen visited every part of England where soldiers were

* Mr. Samuel Gurney and Mr. Joseph J. Gurney several times bore a large part of his election expenses. They insisted on doing this, being determined to promote in every way, direct and indirect, the objects he had at heart.

quartered who had at any time served in the Mauritius. The depositions of both officers and men at Hull, Norwich, Liverpool, Chelsea, and other places were taken; thus the testimony was produced of 320 witnesses of good character, who all spoke to the fact of a trade in slaves. Early in 1827, Mr. Buxton moved for a renewal of the committee; but, at the request of the Government, his motion was deferred till the 26th of May, and, meantime, he strenuously exerted himself in the further investigation of the case.

In his speech on the 9th of May, 1826, he had accused the authorities of the island of culpable neglect. This was highly resented by the late governor, Sir Robert Farquhar, who, in the beginning of May, 1827, complained in the House of Commons of the charge, and dared Mr. Buxton to the proof. This entailed upon him what he had hoped to avoid, the painful necessity of individual crimination. But he was already almost sinking under the weight of business, and the anxiety with which the whole case was fraught proved at length more than he could bear. His health showed decided symptoms of giving way, and his physician, Dr. Farre, strongly urged him to have recourse to rest and quiet; but he was far too deeply impressed by the sufferings of his unhappy clients to desert their cause while a particle of strength remained. In spite of the feelings of illness which rapidly gained ground upon him, he spent the week previous to that on which his motion was to come on in severe and harassing labour. One of his friends writes on Tuesday, May 15th, 1827:—

"I went to breakfast with Mr. Buxton, but he was too ill to come down stairs, and Dr. Farre was sent for. Presently, however, General Hall, Mr. George Stephen, and Mr. Byam

arriving, he joined the party. A large sheet of paper, full of notes, was produced, and they were soon immersed in business. He appeared much oppressed with headache, and very languid. * * * When Dr. Farre arrived he ordered leeches, quiet, and total abstinence from business. I then was about to go, but Mr. Buxton said I must stay and read to him, which I did for many hours. The book was 'Thompson's Journey in South Africa.' At night he seemed very ill."

As he continued seriously unwell, and business necessarily pressed upon him in London, he removed on the Thursday afternoon to Ham House, whence he wrote the following note to Mrs. Upcher:—

"My dear Friend,

"I am far better, but rather feeble and incapable of exertion, and somewhat perplexed by the question,—Ought I to overwork myself, or underwork my slave cause? My judgment is for the second, but my inclination for the first; and the result will be that I shall do both. I am now going to take a ride."

His prediction was but too true. He spent the Saturday in taking a general view of the evidence which had been collected of the atrocious cruelties practised upon the negroes both in their importation and afterwards, when they were reduced to slavery. In the course of that unhappy morning he was so completely overwhelmed with anguish and indignation at the horrors on which he had been dwelling, that he several times left his papers and paced rapidly up and down the lawn entirely overcome by his feelings, and exclaiming aloud, "Oh, it's too bad, it's too bad! I can't bear it."

The frightful result which ensued is thus forcibly described by himself, some months afterwards:—

* * * "Last spring the whole force of my mind and all my faculties were engaged in preparing for the Mauritius question.

I had pledged myself to prove that the slave trade had existed and flourished in that colony, that the state of slavery there was pre-eminently cruel, and that persons of eminence had tolerated these enormities. It is, I think, but justice to myself to admit that the object was a worthy one; that I had embraced it from a sense of duty; that my mind was embued with deep affliction and indignation at the wrongs to which the negro was exposed. I spared no pains and no sacrifices, in order to do justice to my cause; and the anxiety and labour which I endured preyed upon my health. About the middle of May I went to Upton, in order to improve it by change of air; but I was then under the pressure of disease, and my physician described my state by saying, 'You are on fire, though you are not in a blaze.' I concealed from others, I did not even admit to myself, the extent of my indisposition. I could not doubt that I felt ill, but I was willing to suppose that these were nervous feelings, the effects of fatigue of mind, and that they would vanish, as they had often done before, when the exertion was at an end.

"On Saturday, May 19th, I took a survey of the case of cruelty to the negroes, and for two or three hours I was distressed beyond measure, and as much exasperated as distressed, by that scene of cruelty and horrid oppression. I never in my life was so much moved by anything, and I was so exhausted by the excitement that I could not that day renew my exertions. The next morning I awoke feeling very unwell. My wife and the family went to a place of worship, and my daughter remained with me; I think, but I have not any clear recollections, that I told her about 12 o'clock to send for Dr. Farre. I have a vague idea of my wife's return, but beyond that all is lost to me. The fact was, that I was seized with a fit of apoplexy, and it was not till the following Wednesday that I showed any symptoms of recovery. I am glad that the first object I noticed was my dear wife. I well remember the expression of deep anxiety upon her countenance, and I am sure I had seen it before. To her delight I spoke to her, and the words I used were those that expressed my unbounded affection towards her. Thanks to her care, joined to that of my brothers and sisters and of the medical attendants, I gradually recovered. I remember, however, feeling some surprise, as well as mortifi-

cation, at finding that the day fixed for my motion on the Mauritius had passed. Then came the slow progress of recovery; we went to Cromer; all my pursuits, such at least as required mental exertion, were given up, but hence resulted some leisure for reflection. I was then sensible of the sins which I had committed, and was deeply affected by the love and mercy of God, that He had been pleased to spare my life, that he had not called me suddenly into his presence. I hope and believe that I have not lost the sense of his goodness. I never can advert to this warning without acknowledging from my heart that his goodness and mercy have followed me all the days of my life. O gracious Father, grant that I may always retain a most lively feeling of the indulgence and tender compassion which I have experienced at thy hands. Give me repentance, even bitter repentance, that I have ever offended so gracious a Master, and keep me from future transgression."

So deeply had the subject which caused this alarming illness become rooted in his mind, that almost his first words, on recovering full consciousness, were uttered in a decided tone, to the effect that he must get up and go to the House, to bring forward his motion on the Mauritius. When told that the day was already past, he would not give credit to the statement till it was put beyond doubt by reference to the newspaper in which the proceedings of the House on the evening in question were reported.

Such was the history of this remarkable check in the very midst of his career. It need not be said how strong a sensation his illness occasioned both among his immediate friends and fellow-workers, and in a wider circle also. His brothers and sisters collected around him, his children were sent for from a distance, and the strongest alarm was felt until his almost unlooked-for return to consciousness.

"What a change," writes Mr. Macaulay on the 6th of June, "has the mercy of God to us all produced! We have almost

ceased to inquire from hour to hour, and day to day, with breathless solicitude, about every little symptom that might have occurred. We now hear only of returning strength, of spirits, and of approaching convalescence. Let us not forget the change. May God establish and perfect it!"

CHAPTER XII.

1827, 1828.

MEDITATIONS. — REV. C. SIMEON. — LETTER TO LORD W. BENTINCK. — SUTTEE ABOLISHED. — MR. BUXTON REMOVES TO NORTHREPPS. — DEBATE ON SLAVERY. — MR. BUXTON'S REPLY. — THE FREE PEOPLE OF COLOUR. — INTERVIEW WITH MR. HUSKISSON. — THOUGHTS ON HIS ILLNESS.

THE Mauritius case was of course dropped for the year. Mr. Buxton returned to Cromer Hall, and for a long time was obliged to relinquish all sedentary occupation. This interval of unaccustomed leisure was not thrown away; his mind, cut off from its usual employments, turned to reviewing its own state; and while removed from active life, he was in fact strengthening by reflection and prayer those principles from which his actions sprang. Much larger portions of time were given to religious meditation, and to a diligent study of the Holy Scriptures. The marks in his Bible attest his ready application of the Word of God to his own necessities. Dates are placed against many passages and memoranda of circumstances to which they had been particularly appropriate. There also exists a large portfolio full of texts, copied by him and arranged under different heads. He greatly delighted in the Psalms; and on one occasion, when, to use his own words, "some circumstances had arisen which involved him in distress of mind," he thus writes:—

"Finding comfort nowhere else, I resorted to the Bible, and particularly to the Psalms; and truly can I say with David, 'In my distress I called upon the Lord, and he delivered me.' The Psalms are beautiful and instructive to every man who

really studies them; but anguish of mind is necessary to enable us fully to comprehend and taste the pathos and emphasis of their expressions. In David's descriptions of his own anxieties, I found a most lively picture of my own mind. In his eloquent language I uttered my prayers, and, thanks be to God! I was also able to use for myself his songs of rejoicing and gratitude. I have spent some hours almost every Sunday over the Psalms, and I have extracted, under separate heads, David's prayers—his assurance that his prayers were heard and answered—his thanksgivings, &c.; and I meditate, at some future period of leisure, preparing some work for publication on the subject.

"This I may, I believe, say, that these studies have had a strong, and I trust not a transient, effect upon my mind. I recur to the Bible with a pleasure and sometimes with a delight unknown to me before. When I am out of heart, I follow David's example, and fly for refuge to prayer, and he furnishes me with a store of prayer; and I hope 'I love God' better, 'because he hath heard the voice of my supplication; and therefore will I call upon him as long as I live;' and I feel what the text expresses, which I found in my text-book for this day, 'The Lord is my defence, and my God is the rock of my refuge.' And this lesson I have in some degree learnt, that afflictions, as we consider them, are sometimes the chief and the choicest of mercies."

When in Norfolk the woods were his chosen retreat for the enjoyment of the "divine silence," as he called it, of the country. He would take his small well-marked Bible, and wander among the trees, reflecting deeply on what he read, and if his retirement were broken in upon, he would say it was much too soon, he had not gone through half his subjects of thought. Although he never kept a diary, yet after his illness he was in the habit of frequently committing his thoughts to paper, and a very large number of these communings with his own heart still remain. Many of them are preparations for prayer, according to a habit which he thus mentions in one of his papers about this period:—

* * * * *

"There is a practice which I have found highly beneficial, and should any of my children ever see this memorial, I earnestly advise them to adopt it.

"I am in the habit of preparing the substance of my private and family prayers. I believe that we are far too extempore in that duty; not that I recommend any verbal preparation, but a meditation upon the points on which we wish to ask the help of God. The want of this seems to me to lead the mind to wander about, and rather to fill our mouths with a train of words to which we are accustomed than our hearts with a sense of our necessities. I, at least, have found the habit of reflecting on what I shall ask for, before I venture to ask, highly serviceable.

"I am bound to acknowledge that I have always found that my prayers have been heard and answered—not that I have in every instance (though in almost every instance I have) received what I asked for, nor do I expect or wish it. I always qualify my petitions by adding, provided that what I ask for is for my real good and according to the will of my Lord. But with this qualification I feel at liberty to submit my wants and wishes to God in small things as well as in great; and I am inclined to imagine that there are no "little things" with Him. We see that his attention is as much bestowed upon what we call trifles, as upon those things which we consider of mighty importance. His hand is as manifest in the feathers of a butterfly's wing, in the eye of an insect, in the folding and packing of a blossom*, in the curious aqueducts by which a leaf is nourished, as in the creation of a world and in the laws by which the planets move.

"To our limited powers some things appear great and some inconsiderable; but He, infinite in all things, can lavish His power and His wisdom upon every part of his creation. Hence I feel permitted to offer up my prayers, for everything that concerns me. I understand literally the injunction, 'be careful for nothing, but in everything—make your requests known unto God;' and I cannot but notice how amply these prayers have

* He continually pointed out the packing of buds and leaves as beautiful proofs of the Divine wisdom and goodness; so that Mrs. Hoare's children used to call the early spring buds "Uncle Buxton's sermons."

been met. Grant then, O Lord, that I may never fail to pour forth all my burthens, cares, wishes, wants, before thy throne, that I may love to seek thy help."

To Mrs. Buxton.

"Hampstead, July 25. 1827.

"It is now a little past 7 o'clock, and as I am up according to my new fashion, I will tell you that I spent a very pleasant afternoon with Tacy, and much liked his location. He went with me to Dereham the next morning, and I had a nice journey up, reading all the way. * * * And now I must tell you that, reviewing the events of the last few weeks, there are two feelings which rise up in my mind with peculiar force. First, gratitude to Him who has dealt with me with so much true mercy. I think I have some feelings of real thankfulness. I see so plainly the hand of God in what has recently occurred, and so plainly do I discern in them that he is indeed long-suffering and plenteous in mercy, that some degree of warm and lively gratitude springs up in my mind. * * * This is my first feeling, but another has also been my companion. I mean a flow of love and tenderness towards my family. * * * I think my illness has really tended to strengthen the bonds of family affection, and that is no little blessing. And now I must stop to read a few verses in the Bible."

During a visit to Earlham this autumn, in the company of the Rev. Charles Simeon, Mr. Buxton one day persisted in going out shooting, instead of accompanying his friend to a meeting of the Jews' Society in Norwich. Mr. Simeon was a little hurt by this; but receiving not long afterwards a parcel of game, he wrote Mr. Buxton the following characteristic letter.

"King's College, Cambridge,
October 16. 1827.

"My dear Friend,

"A kind present of game demands my grateful acknowledgments, which with much pleasure I send you. But the precise time of its arrival necessarily excites in my mind some reflections. What! is my beloved friend conscious that in withstanding all my extemporaneous oratory he has humbled me — and

does he send me this as a peace-offering? That I have sighed, it is true; that thoughts have arisen in my mind of somewhat a painful nature, is true. And I will tell you what they were:—

"1. I have deeply sympathised with him and his beloved relatives in his affliction.*

"2. My beloved friend has prayed with that dear departed saint, and therefore has doubtless his own soul, perhaps in consequence of his own affliction, in a devout state.

"3. My union with that whole family is near akin to the union of the saints in heaven; and my soul, in consequence of dear Rachel's experience being read to me, had been so in heaven, that I actually felt it a condescension to come down and dine with the party, even though they had all been dukes and duchesses. Peter on Tabor was scarcely more averse to descend than I.

"On these grounds I thought that an act of condescension and self-denial on your part, if self-denial it was, might have been not unseasonable. But I checked and condemned myself, and said, what! shall I wish my beloved friend to serve and honour *God* for my sake? *No!* if he will show kindness to *me* for the *Lord's sake*, I will accept it as the most grateful offering in the world; but to serve *the Lord* for *my* sake would be productive of nothing but grief and shame to my soul.

"Now, my dear friend, you see you have shot me flying, and penetrated my heart, and let out, *not ill blood*, (there is none of that I assure you,) but the stream of love, which was pent up there. And to show that you are pleased with your success, you shall, if convenient to you, send me a little more game to be dressed on Oct. 30., when I shall have a large party of Jews (friends of that despised people) to dine with me; and this will show you in what spirit I write, and with what cordiality and affection I am

"Yours,

"CHARLES SIMEON."

About this time, Mr. Buxton heard, to his great satisfaction, that Lord William Bentinck was appointed

* This refers to the death of his sister-in-law, Rachel Gurney. See Memoir of Elizabeth Fry, vol. ii. p. 55.

Governor-general of India, and immediately went up to town to discuss with him the subject of Suttee, and to urge him to employ his authority for the abolition of that atrocious practice. A short time afterwards he addressed the following letter to him:—

"My dear Lord, "Cromer Hall, October 22. 1827.

"The short interview which I had with you lately has been to me a matter of sincere gratification. I now feel that I can leave in your hand the question, whether the British Government ought, or ought not, to tolerate the annual sacrifice of several hundred females; and I have the satisfaction of knowing that you will do everything which *ought* to be done. When Mr. Canning was going to India, I ventured to trouble him on the business: his answer was the same as I received from you. He assured me, that the subject should engage his most serious attention, and that what he could do should be done. I have always lamented that he did not go to India, from a conviction that his great mind would have been ill at ease, while such horrid customs as Suttee and infanticide prevailed. Forgive me for saying, that I feel the same confidence in your Lordship as I did in Mr. Canning. I enclose you a copy of a letter I received from Lord Hastings. I applied to him, in consequence of hearing from a friend of mine (the Rev. Mr. Glover of this county), that he said 'he should have abolished the practice of Suttee, if he had remained in India another year.' In the letter he says, 'he would have suppressed it if he had been sure of support at home.' Happily there is not the same doubt now as to support at home. In March last, Mr. Poynder moved a resolution at the Court of Proprietors, declaring that it is the duty of the paternal government to interfere to prevent the destruction of human life. Some opposition was made; but the general feeling was too strong to be resisted, and it was carried by a great majority, the minority being only five or six. I venture to send you the report of that debate, and also a publication called the 'Friend of India,' in which there are some valuable papers on the subject, written, I believe, by Dr. Marshman of Serampore. With every wish that you and Lady William may return in safety from India, and that millions may have reason to rejoice that you went there, I have the honour," &c.

To face page 209.

From a Sketch by Mrs. Buxton.

NORTHREPPS HALL.

It is well known that, soon after Lord William Bentinck reached India, he abolished the practice of Suttee at a single blow. Mr. Buxton hailed the news with delight and thankfulness. The evil had indeed been extirpated by the hand of another; but he had the satisfaction of feeling that no opportunity had been wasted by him of forwarding that happy event.

In the course of this winter, Mr. Buxton was obliged, with much regret, to leave Cromer Hall; the proprietor, Mr. Windham, having determined to replace it by a new mansion for his own residence. There was no house equally suitable near Cromer; but being much attached to the neighbourhood, and very unwilling to leave it, he gladly accepted Mr. R. H. Gurney's offer of Northrepps Hall, which, although smaller than his last place of abode, yet possessed many points of attraction; especially, that within a quarter of a mile lived his sister Miss S. M. Buxton, and his cousin Miss Gurney.

Northrepps Cottage, the residence of these ladies, stands in a deep secluded dell, opening on the fishing village of Overstrand and the German Ocean. The path to it from the Hall lies through the woods; and thither he always turned his steps when his spirits needed to be enlivened, or his anxieties shared; well knowing that his presence would ever be hailed with eager delight.

He was scarcely settled at Northrepps, when he was called to London to resume his parliamentary labours, which had been so unfortunately cut short in the preceding year. His still very uncertain health made the prospect of recommencing work an anxious one; and he appeared quite unable to resume his attack on the Mauritius slave trade. "It is a problem to me," he said, "what I shall do this session, and what will happen;" adding, "however, perhaps I shall outlive

you all. I should not wonder, if I do not overwork myself."

His exertions were first called for on behalf of the West Indies. The year of probation granted by Mr. Canning to the colonial assemblies had now more than expired; and they had done nothing towards the mitigation of slavery. Of the eight bills recommended for their adoption by Mr. Canning, *not one* had been accepted by any colony, except Nevis. But the Government were not yet discouraged; they were still anxious to persuade, rather than to compel. Nor could they be blamed for trying every method of suasion, before resorting to force. The right of the mother country to legislate directly for her colonies had, in one great instance, been successfully defied. It might, therefore, have been no wise policy to attempt coercion, till all gentler methods had been tried in vain. Accordingly, in 1828, Sir George Murray, as a last experiment, despatched circular letters to all the colonial assemblies, once more urging them, in strong terms, to effect for themselves the required improvement in the condition of their slaves. Most truly did Mr. Stanley state in his speech on the 14th of May, 1833, that it was not "till all means had been exhausted; till every suggestion had been made; till every warning had been given; and had not only been given in vain, but had been met by the colonial legislatures with the most determined opposition; that England took the work of reconstructing West Indian society into her own hands." These circular letters were "entirely disregarded."

Had Mr. Buxton been in vigorous health, he would certainly have done what he could to obtain bolder measures from the Government, but his bodily powers failed him.

On the 6th of March Mr. Wilmot Horton brought forward a motion for the publication of some minutes relative "to the Demerara and Berbice Manumission Order in Council," to prove the desirableness of its not being enforced.*

Mr. Buxton had brought together some documents from which to answer Mr. Wilmot Horton; but he became so unwell that he was obliged to give up the attempt to peruse them, and went down to the House of Commons without any intention of speaking. To his dismay he found, on reaching the House, that Mr. William Smith was the only abolitionist present beside himself. Mr. Wilmot Horton's opening speech was extremely able, and was listened to by Mr. Buxton with feelings of real distress, while he looked in vain towards the door of the House, in the hope that Mr. Brougham or Dr. Lushington might come to the rescue.

At length a bitter tirade against the Abolitionists from one of their opponents stung him to the quick; and he rose to reply, beginning with somewhat severe comment "on the acrimonious speech of the hon. member for C——, who, after a long lecture on command of temper and control of tongue, has ended," he said, "by charging us with exaggeration, misrepresentation, quackery, and nonsense."

"I must confess, however, that he has sneered at us in very good company: the rights of man and the laws of God were equally visited by his sarcasm. Now, I defy him to prove any one instance of misrepresentation. I challenge him to abstain from general condemnation, and to put his finger upon that particular in which we have deceived the country. I will do so with regard to him — I will mark out those particulars in which he himself has been guilty of misrepresentation."

* Hansard for that date.

He then went through the common assertions of the West Indians—they had denied the existence of flogging; of Sunday markets; of obstacles to manumission; he proved, and from the evidence of the West Indians themselves, that these did exist. His opponents were for ever dwelling on the happiness and comfort of their slaves, —

"But how comes it," he asked, "that these happiest of the happy decrease at a rate entirely unequalled in the history of man? * * * The hon. member has indignantly censured my hon. friend (Mr. W. Smith) for introducing the phrases 'rights of men and laws of God;' and I do not wonder that he is somewhat provoked at these obnoxious expressions; for one cannot think of slavery without perceiving that it is an usurpation of the one and a violation of the other. The right hon. gentleman, the mover of this motion, tells us that no one can reconcile the promise we have given for the extinction of slavery with the promise which we have also given for a due consideration of the rights of the parties interested. We are reduced to the alternative, he tells us, of sacrificing the planter to the interests of the slave, or the slave to the interests of the planter. If we are in that predicament, and must decide for the one or the other, my judgment is unequivocally in favour of the slave. And it is a consideration of the 'rights of man, and the laws of God' which leads me to that unequivocal decision."

He concludes in these words: —

"I would give the negro all that I could give him with security; I would do every possible thing to mitigate and sweeten his lot; and to his children I would give unqualified emancipation. Having done this, I would settle with the planters. I am a friend to compensation, but it is compensation on the broadest scale. * * * Do you ask compensation for him who has wielded the whip? Then I ask compensation for him who has smarted under its lash! — Do you ask compensation for loss of property, contingent and future? Then I ask compensation for unnumbered wrongs, the very least of which is the incapacity of possessing any property whatever.

If compensation be demanded, we re-echo the demand. It is that which we most fervently desire; only let it be just compensation, dealt out for the many who have suffered, and not confined to the few who may suffer in one particular."

One of his friends writes to Mr. J. J. Gurney :—

"The whole House was carried along by his earnestness, cheered him vehemently, and listened attentively. He was much congratulated on the success of his reply."

Little more could be done towards advancing the Anti-slavery question during this session. Mr. Brougham, who had intended to bring it forward, was prevented from doing so by ill health: and Dr. Lushington's duties were too onerous to permit of his carrying on the struggle single-handed; but during the last year he and Mr. Brougham had been engaged in their arduous contest on behalf of the free people of colour in the West Indies, endeavouring to rescue them from their painful and humiliating position. Dr. Lushington wrote in November, 1827,—

"I send you sundry letters and documents from Wilmot Horton, and by his desire. We have had warm work since you left London, and it seems likely to continue; however I am in high spirits. We have Brougham in full energy, strength, and determination, and we have a case in all points impregnable. Would I had more leisure! for my appetite is whetted by all the follies and iniquities of the planters."

At length, in the session of 1828, Dr. Lushington's exertions in behalf of the free people of colour were crowned with complete success. An Order in Council was issued, by which they were at once placed on the same footing, in every respect, as their white fellow citizens: a measure fraught with momentous consequences to the welfare of the West Indies.

On the 20th of March, Mr. Buxton had an interview

with Mr. Huskisson. He offered to put Government into possession of all his documents and evidence respecting the slave trade at the Mauritius if they would go on with the inquiry, as he was unable to do so, and he strongly urged them to take it up. Mr. Huskisson replied that they would consider about it, and desired that documents relating to the cruel usage of the slaves should be sent to him. He also assured Mr. Buxton that the trade was now stopped, that the registry was enforced, and that some Orders in Council would be sent out and put into operation.

No other steps were at present taken by the Government; they had previously sent out a commission of inquiry, and further measures were deferred till its report should have been received.

Mr. Buxton writes in a paper dated Sunday, the 25th May, 1828:—

"I keep this as the anniversary of my illness, which began on Sunday, May 20th, 1827; and I must not let the day pass without returning my solemn and fervent thanks to thee, my God, for that most gracious visitation, coupled with solemn and fervent prayers that I may never lose the benefit which this visitation was sent to confer. I thank thee, O Lord, that thou wast pleased to administer that sharp antidote. None other perhaps would have been effectual. I was within the jaws of death, and was I fit to die? Was I prepared to encounter the presence of my Maker? How do my sins marshal themselves in order under such a question? Again I thank thee, O Lord, that thou didst deliver me, and I can use the words of the Psalmist (Psalm ciii. four first verses), with some emphasis and some application to myself. There is not a clause in these verses which is not my own. My disease was healed, my iniquity was pardoned, my life, natural and spiritual, had a Redeemer, and loving kindness and tender mercy was that which I, a sinner, received at the hands of God; and therefore my cry unto thee is that thou wouldst give me such a deep sense of

thy mercy, such a sense or rather vision of thy goodness, that I may love thee with all my heart, and all my mind, and all my strength: and therefore I pray that I may remember my latter end, the approaching day of judgment, and prepare to meet it."

CHAPTER XIII.

1828, 1829.

THE HOTTENTOTS.—DR. PHILIP.—VAN RIEBECH'S REGRETS.—MISERIES OF THE HOTTENTOTS.—DR. PHILIP'S RESEARCHES.—MR. BUXTON'S MOTION.—THE GOVERNMENT ACQUIESCES.—LETTER FROM DR. PHILIP.—THE ORDER IN COUNCIL SENT OUT.—LETTER TO MR. J. J. GURNEY.—THE HOTTENTOTS SET FREE.—ALARMS DIE AWAY.—HAPPY RESULT.—THE KAT RIVER SETTLEMENT.

ALTHOUGH unable to take much part in public affairs during this session, yet, at the instance of the Rev. Dr. Philip of the Cape of Good Hope, Mr. Buxton made an effort in behalf of the Hottentots, which was crowned with easy and complete success.

Eight years before, Dr. Philip had been sent out by the London Missionary Society, on a deputation appointed to inquire into the state of their missions in South Africa. In the course of these investigations he had become acquainted with the grievous state of degradation in which the Hottentots were held by the inhabitants of the colony, and especially by the Dutch boors. One hundred and seventy years before, they had been the undisturbed possessors of that fertile tract of country which is now comprehended under the name of the "Cape Colony." In 1652 the first Dutch settlement was formed, and the curse of Christian neighbours fell upon the hapless owners of the land.

The first germ of the treatment they met with may be seen in the following extracts from the journal of Van Riebech, the Dutch governor.

"December 13. 1652.

"To-day the Hottentots came with thousands of cattle and sheep close to our fort, so that their cattle nearly mixed with ours. We feel vexed to see so many fine head of cattle, and not to be able to buy to any considerable extent. If it had been indeed allowed, we had opportunity to-day to deprive them of 10,000 head, which, however, if we obtain orders to that effect, can be done at any time, and even more conveniently, because they will have greater confidence in us. With 150 men, 10,000 or 11,000 head of black cattle might be obtained without danger of losing one man; and many savages might be taken without resistance, in order to be sent as slaves to India, as they still always come to us unarmed."

A day or two later we find him "wondering at the ways of Providence, which permitted such noble animals to remain in the possession of heathens." It was not long before he thought it best to thwart the ways of Providence instead of wondering at them; and the system which he began was carried out by the Dutch, and afterwards by the English, until the Hottentots had sunk to the lowest depths of misery. Nothing can be more painful than the accounts given of them at the time of Dr. Philip's first visit to the Cape. They were not like the negro slaves, the legal property of certain individuals; they were at the mercy of all who chose to oppress them and compel their services: not even possessing that degree of protection which the hateful system of slave ownership affords. Their tribes were public property, and any one might seize as many of them as he pleased for his private use. Their rich lands and vast herds of cattle had long since become the spoiler's prey. At the caprice of the Dutch boors they were subjected to the heaviest labours, to every species of harassing annoyance, to every kind of revolting punishment. Beneath this grinding misery their numbers had dwindled, their persons had become dwarfed, and

their minds brutalised, till the very negro slaves looked down on them as lower and baser drudges, far below the level of mankind.

In 1822 Dr. Philip returned for a short time to England, and communicated this information to Mr. Wilberforce, Dr. Lushington, and Mr. Buxton, who agreed that the former should move in the House for a commission of inquiry to proceed to the Cape; as also to the Mauritius, and to Ceylon: this was accordingly done, and in 1824 we find Mr. Buxton moving for the reports received from these commissioners; which afforded some information of value. In 1826 Dr. Philip again came back to England, and after a time published his "Researches in South Africa," which excited much attention, and he urged Mr. Buxton to bring the case of the Hottentots before Parliament. Although feeling great interest in the subject, Mr. Buxton was too deeply engrossed by the Mauritius question to turn aside at that time. In 1828, however, he was able to make himself master of the subject, and gave notice of a motion for an address to the king on behalf of the natives of South Africa.

He writes, July, 1828,—

"I have not yet determined what I shall say about the Hottentots. I shall take as the foundation of my argument their legal freedom, prove that they are practically slaves, and demand that we act up to our engagement and make them free; but it is doubtful if I shall speak. Government will probably give way to my motion, on condition that I abstain from speaking. Terms not to be rejected I think."

To this compromise the Government agreed. Mr. Buxton brought forward his motion without a single comment; and Sir George Murray (Secretary for the Colonies) then rose, and briefly expressed the concur-

rence of the Government. The address was unanimously agreed to, and the Hottentots were free! Mr. Buxton walked up to Dr. Philip, after the motion had been carried, and said, "Ah, these men do not know the good they have done!"

In a hasty note to Mrs. Upcher, he thus announced the triumph:—

"July 17. 1828.

"I have only time to say, that we have recorded a resolution of the House of Commons, with regard to the Hottentots, which is their Magna Charta; and which will spread liberty, and, with liberty, a thousand other blessings, over that great and growing territory."

The Rev. Dr. Philip to T. F. Buxton, Esq.

"My dear Sir, "July 16. 1828.

"The more I reflect upon the decision of Parliament on Tuesday evening, the more I am struck with its importance. It is intimately connected with all the great questions now before the public, which have for their object, to ameliorate the condition of the coloured population in every region of the globe; it is one of the principal stones in the foundation of that temple which Mr. Wilberforce has been so long labouring to rear, for the protection of the oppressed; and it has given a strength and an elevation to the building, which will render the whole more secure, and its future progress more easy. I wish you could be present at our missionary stations when the glad tidings shall be announced; you would see many a sparkling eye, many a cheek furrowed with tears of joy, and hear your name associated with many a thanksgiving to God for this unexpected deliverance."

It was a singular coincidence that, only two days after this motion had passed in Parliament, Major General Bourke, the just and humane Governor of the Cape, promulgated an ordinance (well known afterwards as the Fiftieth Ordinance), by which the Hottentots were placed on the same footing as the other inhabitants of

the colony. As soon as Sir George Murray heard of this step, an Order in Council was issued (January 15. 1829), ratifying the ordinance, and, moreover, prohibiting any future alteration of it by any colonial authority. When Mr. Buxton, who had spent the autumn and winter at Northrepps, came back to London for the session of 1829, he found the business thus happily concluded.

He sent this intelligence to Mr. J. J. Gurney; but begins his letter by alluding to the excitement which prevailed on account of the Duke of Wellington's expressed intention to take into consideration the removal of the Catholic disabilities.

"February 9. 1829.

"We had a slave meeting at Brougham's yesterday; and S. Gurney would go with me, to prevent them from putting too much upon me. Brougham, Mackintosh, Denman, Spring Rice, Wm. Smith, Macaulay, were the party. They were all in the highest glee about the Catholics; Brougham particularly. They seemed exquisitely delighted with the vexation of the Tories, who are, and have reason to be, they say, bitterly affronted; and the great ones among them vow they will have an apology, in the shape of some good place, or they will never forgive the Duke for letting them go down to the House as strong Protestants, and insisting upon their returning that very day, stout Catholics! They say they do not mind changing their opinions, —that is a duty which they must sometimes pay to their chiefs, —but they think it hard to be obliged to turn right-about-face at the word of command, without a moment being given to change their convictions.

"The Duke is very peremptory. The story goes, that he said to Mr. ——, who has a place under Government, 'We have settled the matter, and hope you like it.' Mr. —— said he would take time to consider it. 'Oh yes! you shall have plenty of time; I don't want your answer before four o'clock to-day. I shall thank you for it then; for if you don't like our measures, we must have your office and seat for somebody else.'

"To-morrow we are to have a fierce debate. The high church party are very furious, and talk of calling upon the country, and I expect we shall have a good deal of bitterness.

"As to slavery, we determined not to fix our plans for a week, in order to see the turn this Catholic business is likely to take, for the House will hear nothing else now, but we are to have a day fixed for Brougham's motion before Easter. He wanted me to begin on the Mauritius; but I said, 'No! if they are not in a temper to hear you, I am sure they will not hear me.'

"Spring Rice said that he had seen General Bourke, late governor of the Cape of Good Hope, who tells him that Government have sent out an Order in Council, giving entire emancipation to the Hottentots. If this proves true I shall be excessively delighted, and shall never say again that I am sorry I went into Parliament; not that I did much in the business, but I flatter myself I did a little. Do get M. to read Dr. Philip's book on South Africa. I think you would not repent if you did the same. I am very well, and in good spirits, though somewhat worried about the tiresome mines, which want attention."

His delight was well-founded. From the day that the Fiftieth Ordinance became law the Hottentots were raised to the level of their white oppressors; they were protected by the same laws, they could own property, they could demand wages in return for their labour, they could no longer be seized, "like stray cattle," if they left their village bounds; in short, they were become a free people; and since that day civilization and Christianity, with all their retinue of blessings, have flourished among them. For a while dismal forebodings and fierce complaints rang among the colonists at this sudden inroad upon their oppressive privileges; but after a few slight commotions both their anger and their fears died away: and the experience of eighteen years has abundantly approved the wisdom, as well as the justice, of this important measure.

To the N. E. of the colony lies the rich pasture land of the Kat River; from which, in 1827, the Caffres had been expelled, after a long guerilla warfare with the colonists. On this tract of country the colonial Government, at the suggestion of Captain (now Sir Andries) Stockenstrom, determined to form a Hottentot settlement, as a sort of outwork against the Caffres, and also to afford an opportunity for drawing forth the latent energies of the Hottentots themselves. The latter quickly poured into the settlement from all parts of the colony, but for a long time they had to struggle with every species of privation and danger. Captain Stockenstrom had no tools to give them; when they asked him what means they would have to cultivate the ground, he could only answer, "If you cannot do it with your fingers you had better not go there." However, they set to work, lending each other such tools as they possessed, and soon began water-courses to irrigate the land for the seed-corn allowed by Government.

When Dr. Philip returned from England to Africa he found them still in want of even the necessaries of life; but they had commenced the cultivation of the soil; and many of them, having been trained under missionaries while in the colony, were thirsting for education, though, as yet, no regular teachers were allowed by the Colonial Government to visit them. At one of the new hamlets, named after Mr. Wilberforce, a school had been established, which was attended by sixty or seventy children. The teacher was a young Hottentot, who could himself read but very imperfectly. To an observation of Dr. Philip he replied, that he could teach but little, but that as soon as a qualified master should come, he would resign his charge and take his seat among the children.

At another hamlet, named after Mr. Buxton *, a school had already been brought into excellent order, under the direction of a daughter of Andrew Stoffles, a converted Hottentot.

Further on, they observed a well-dressed female Hottentot standing on a stone, tinkling a small bell. They followed her unperceived, and soon found her in a hut with fifty children closely wedged in around her. She was the village school-mistress; her only apparatus being the separated leaves of a New Testament, one of which was held by each of the children, and they were quickly learning to spell the words. A few days after Dr. Philip's arrival, the Hottentots assembled to petition him to provide them with a teacher. "At an early hour," says he, "we sat down under the shade of some spreading trees, near the banks of the Kat River, and surrounded by some of the noblest scenery I ever saw. After prayer and singing a hymn several of the head men addressed the assembly, and then Andrew Stoffles delivered a speech which produced an effect I had never before seen equalled. The main topic of his address was the former oppression of the Hottentots, and he described what he had seen and felt, rapidly pointing out the parallel between their own position (former and present) with the bondage of the Children of Israel in Egypt, and their entrance into the promised land. The

* Sixteen years later, the Rev. James Read thus refers to the village of Buxton: —

"Kat River, May 29. 1843.

"Buxton is one of our largest locations; we have a good school there. The school-room, which is so large that it serves also for a chapel, has been built chiefly at the expense of Sir Fowell Buxton. The people are very proud of the name of their place: the situation is delightful; the soil very fertile, being watered by a small stream, which is tributary to the Kat River. It is furnished with forests of the finest timber." (Report of the London Missionary Society, 1844, p. 125.)

analogy was finely brought out; and, as he went on from point to point of the resemblance, it was wonderful to see the effect produced upon the feelings of his audience; they became at length convulsed with emotion: numbers, unable to support their feelings, hastened away to weep apart. When they were a little composed they assembled round us again, and closed the business of the meeting by an urgent and unanimous request that the Rev. J. Read might come among them as their missionary. The request was granted, and with the happiest effects."

The following extracts, from authentic documents, will show the remarkable success of this experiment. But it must be premised that the Hottentots who did not emigrate to the Kat River amounted at that time to about 25,000. They continued in the colony, working industriously, like any other labourers, for wages, and protected by the laws. A gentleman of great respectability, writing in 1832, says, "The number of crimes charged against the Hottentots in the colony, at the circuits, has of late greatly diminished, * * * a great improvement is clearly manifest in their moral condition."

The Kat River settlement originally contained about 5000 Hottentots. It has continued to flourish in the most satisfactory manner, and has proved a strong defence to the colony, in the late Caffre war.

So early as 1832, we find it stated that —

"The success of the Hottentots has been equal to their industry and good conduct. By patient labour, with manly moderation and Christian temperance, they have converted the desert into a fruitful field."*

* Letter in Anti-Slavery Record, vol. i. p. 124.

It is worthy of remark, that, although while in a state of servitude the Hottentots had been very much given to drinking, they acquired at the Kat River remarkable habits of temperance; and of their own accord petitioned, and successfully, against the establishment of brandy canteens.

They had already "two missionaries, whose chapels were regularly filled, and several schools crowded with orderly and intelligent children."*

In 1832, they paid taxes to the Government to the amount of 2300 rix dollars. In 1833, Colonel Bell (the Government Secretary of the colony) stated that,—

"As to that large proportion of the Hottentots who remained in the service of the colonists as free labourers, their character and condition are every day improving. Those settled at the Kat River, as small farmers, have made a very surprising progress. A large portion of them, from being an indolent, intemperate, and improvident class, have, since a field was opened for virtuous ambition, become industrious, sober, and prudent in their conduct."

In the same year Captain Stockenstrom (Chief Civil Commissioner of the Eastern Province) writes†,—

"The Hottentots at the Kat River have cultivated an extent of country which has surprised every body who has visited the location. * * * Instead of apathy or indifference about property, they have become (now that they have property to contend for) as covetous and litigious about land and water as any other set of colonists. They have displayed the utmost anxiety to have schools established among them. * * * They travel considerable distances to attend divine service regularly. Their spiritual guides speak with delight of the fruit of their labours. Nowhere have Temperance Societies succeeded half so well as among this people. They have repulsed all the attacks of the Caffres. They pay every tax like the rest of the colonists.

* Letter in Anti-Slavery Record, vol. i. p. 124.
† To T. Pringle, Esq.

They have rendered the Kat River by far the safest part of the frontier. * * * As far as the land is arable they have made a garden of it from one end to the other."

According to Colonel Wade*,

"They had, in 1833, completed 55 canals for irrigation, 44 of which measured 24 miles! Their works," said he, "give the best evidence that the Hottentots can be as industrious, and are as capable of contending with ordinary difficulties, as their fellow-men."

Dr. Philip had described the Hottentots in bondage, as —

"In a more degraded and imbruted state than they were in a state of nature; trampled upon by their masters; held as a perquisite of office by the Colonial Governor; regarded by the negro slaves as only fit to be their drudges; despised by the Caffres, and by all the natives in a state of freedom; and represented by travellers as scarcely possessing the human form, as the most filthy, stupid beings in the world; as scarcely to be considered belonging to the human race."

He thus describes them after their settlement at the Kat River: —

"The Kat River now presents a scene of industry, sobriety, and decency, not surpassed by the peasantry of any country in Europe. They are building themselves good houses; they are very decently clothed; their industry is admitted even by their enemies."

In 1839, Mr. Backhouse mentions his having visited the Hottentots, and found them "dressed like decent plain people of the labouring class in England. In the sixteen schools of the Kat River district, they had about 1200 scholars, and an attendance of about 1000."†

* Evidence before Aborigines Committee.
† Backhouse's Narrative of a Visit to South Africa, p. 186.

CHAPTER XIV.

1829.

CATHOLIC EMANCIPATION. — REFLECTIONS. — THE MAURITIUS SLAVE TRADE. — AGREEABLE NEWS. — THE MAURITIUS CASE REVIVED. — LETTER TO MR. TWISS. — THE GOVERNMENT ADMIT THE EXISTENCE OF THE SLAVE TRADE. — ITS COMPLETE EXTINCTION. — MR. GEORGE STEPHEN. — MR. JEREMIE.

DURING the session of 1829, Parliament was chiefly occupied by the discussions on the question of Catholic Emancipation. Mr. Buxton's constituents at Weymouth were opposed to the measure; and the knowledge of this opposition, combined with his own doubts, made him for a considerable time unwilling to vote at all on the question. With this neutrality, however, he could not long remain satisfied. After serious deliberation he became thoroughly convinced of the justice and expediency of the measure, and thenceforward gave it his support; a step which much offended many of his friends, and seriously endangered his seat for Weymouth.

To a Friend.

"House of Commons, March 5.

"Here I am waiting for the Catholic debate, and you will be sorry to hear,—no, you will not, you are too valiant,—that I am going to secure my non-election next Parliament by voting for the Roman Catholics to-night. I really must vote: the peace and safety of Ireland depend on our vote. I spent yesterday with Macaulay and Wilberforce very pleasantly. I am full of business, but not overworked; this is just what I like."

After expressing a hope that he might not be un-

spiritualised by the cares and engagements of the world, he writes, Feb. 15th: —

"Substance of private prayer:—To return thanks that I can trust that my sins, many and grievous, have been forgiven, and that there is to me an offer of reconciliation; that prayer and the Scriptures are become more sweet to me; that I have a wife to my heart's content, a daughter who has the ability to be my companion and friend, that Edward and Harry are doing so well, and that the three little ones are a source of pleasure, not anxiety; that peace reigns among us; that I have so many and such dear friends; that I more clearly see, by study of the Scriptures, particularly the Psalms, that prayer is commanded, and that it is sure to be answered.

* * * * * *

"Last Sunday, I prayed that the week might bring relief from anxiety: it has come. Again I repeat my prayer. Satisfy us early with thy mercy, that we may rejoice and be glad all our days. Give thy help to-morrow in the work of that day,—thy help at the missionary meeting, that wisdom may be granted us in the correction of the errors and evils which may have crept into that glorious cause. Every needful help at every hour, and thy spirit with us; the spirit of prayer, fervent and acceptable; the spirit of patience and submission; the spirit of hope and confidence."

On the 29th of March, he gives a kind of summary of the preceding twelve months.

"Wednesday next is my birthday; I shall then be forty-three. That day I have engaged to spend with my admirable friend Wilberforce, who, having devoted his life to the purpose of conferring upon Africa the greatest blessing which man can bestow on man, is now passing the remnant of his days in retirement and repose. I wish, according to my usual practice, to review the proceedings of the past year. In public life I have taken but little part; Brougham's illness prevented, during last session, the proposed discussion on slavery; and during this session nothing has been thought of but the Catholic question. I assisted, however, in one great work, which, although it passed almost in silence, is likely to be attended with the most

important and happy consequences,—the liberation of the Hottentots.

"It is recorded of Paul that he thanked God and took courage; and with thankfulness to God that I was entrusted with this easy and honourable task, I hope to gather from it confidence and encouragement in those other works of humanity in which I am engaged. Another work of a public nature which has engaged me, is the state of the Church Missionary Society. I attended in February a meeting of the Society, and felt it my duty to say, that I thought it desirable a close and sifting inquiry should be instituted into its circumstances; in that I am now engaged.

"Last autumn my mother ended a life which had been shaded by a variety of misfortunes: her death was peaceful, and I doubt not that, through the merits of her blessed Redeemer, she was admitted to everlasting happiness. * * * I last saw her at Weymouth, in August; her image is clear to my mind, and long will it be before I forget the sweetness and humility which then adorned her. Of her once high spirit, nothing remained which did not become a Christian. She was still clear and strong in judgment; still, as always, entirely devoid of every selfish feeling; but there was a meekness and subjection about her which evidently descended from above. * * * I saw her buried in a little burying ground at Bridport: and very thankful indeed was I, that, after the troubles and conflicts she had encountered, we could lay her there, in a sure and certain hope of a joyful resurrection."

After mentioning other events of the year, he continues:—

"Within the bounds of my own immediate family I have been peculiarly prosperous. * * * 'Bless the Lord, O my soul; and all that is within me, bless His holy name.'

"And peculiarly happy am I also in the next circle,—that of my chosen friends. I have often thought that there is no one so rich in friends as I; but this is a large topic, so I waive it.

"In my public capacity it has pleased God, in depriving me of strong health, to deprive me of the power of much exertion.

My public reputation has, I think, considerably fallen. If I could be sure that I have done as much as my reduced strength would admit, this would give me no concern; and, to speak the truth, it does give me no concern.

"In my outward affairs I have had, as I have said, many trials in some particulars; in others, I have been equally successful. But I do believe, I recognise both misfortune and success, as coming from the same Divine and fatherly hand."

After other prayers and thanksgivings, he thus concludes:—

"I pray also that I may evermore be helped o f thee in my public pursuits: that in the cause of the oppressed negro I may not be a negligent or a useless advocate. Be thy blessing there, O Lord!

"That particularly with regard to the oppressed negro at the Mauritius I may have thy help. 'For the oppression of the poor, for the sighing of the needy; now will I arise, saith the Lord.' O may this be verified, and that speedily!

"That thy help may attend me in my present labours on the missionary question.

"I do thank thee, O Lord, that I have not now, as heretofore, to address prayer to thee with regard to the Hottentot question, but praises and thanksgivings."

* * * * * *

"And now for those dear to me, for my friends, I pray that every blessing I have asked for myself may attend them. I feel especially prompted to pray for some of them; especially for poor dear Macaulay, who I know is in much sorrow. Let me plead, O Lord, his sacrifices in the slave question, his many trials, his unparalleled labours; the services he has rendered, and the reward he receives at the hand of man,—reproach, calumny, and insult. Be pleased, O Lord, thyself to reward him; smooth away every difficulty; grant him prosperity; and grant him to grow in grace: enrich him with the comfort of thy Holy Spirit; make him prosperous here, and happy hereafter. * * * For some other of my friends, I pray that their hearts may cleave to thee, that their affections may be set on things above, not on things on the earth; and that finding

mortification and disappointment here, they may seek comfort with thee, at whose right hand are pleasures for evermore.

"For all my relatives, and for all my friends, I pray that the blessing of God, through Jesus Christ, may rest upon them."

He had hoped this session to have again brought forward the Mauritius case.

To Zachary Macaulay, Esq.

"London, April, 1829.

"When I was last in town I had been for some time extremely unwell; and I then thought, as I believe you thought also, that it would not be prudent for me to undertake any heavy business this session. Since that time I have been much better; and, reflecting much upon the Mauritius horrors, I cannot feel comfortable to let those questions rest. I really wish to ask your advice; I well know the deep interest which you take in my welfare, as well as in that of our cause; and now tell me, whether in your opinion I ought to hazard the 'inevitable death' with which Dr. Farre last year threatened me, or to desert a cause which now more than ever wants the aid of all its friends. I confess the bias of my mind is strongly in favour of bringing forward the Mauritius cruelty case; and if you agree with me, so I believe it must be. If you fix a meeting of our friends at Brougham's, I shall make a point of being there.

* * * * * *

"With respect to our proceedings in Parliament, I am still inclined to believe that the best thing which could be done would be for Brougham to make his motion.

"It is clear that a very powerful statement is wanting in order to renew the interest of the public; and having him, and Mackintosh, and our other friends ready for a great effort upon the admission of slave evidence, we are so safe, and so certain of making a great impression, that I cannot bring myself to think any thing else is so good."

The attention of Parliament was so entirely engrossed by the Catholic question, that his intention respecting

the Mauritius could not be carried into effect, nor was his health equal to any exertion in public. In private, he continually pressed the Government to further measures; one of which is alluded to in the following memorandum, which also refers to the success of Mr. Brougham's endeavours to procure the recognition of negro evidence in the colonies:—

"May 17. 1829.

"1. On Tuesday last, Sir George Murray told me that Government would next session introduce a bill for admitting negro evidence; and likewise a bill for improving courts of justice. 2. That they would grant a commission for investigating the slave trade at the Mauritius, and the condition of the slaves. 3. Twiss told me on Thursday that Government had resolved to send out orders to emancipate the Indians at Honduras, in whose cause, at the instigation of Colonel Arthur, we moved about three years ago.* 4. Dr. Philip, on Thursday, told me that the Order in Council with respect to the Hottentots was all that he wished. So far, then, God has been pleased to answer our prayers. My text and my comfort to-day has been, 'Delight thyself in the Lord, and he shall give thee the desires of thine heart. Commit thy way unto the Lord, trust also in him, and he shall bring it to pass.'"

Towards the close of the session, Sir Robert Farquhar recurred to the statement formerly made, that slave-trading had existed in the Mauritius during his government, and required that the charge should be investigated, or retracted. Mr. Buxton explained the reason why it had been dropped, and read the opinion of his physician, that he could not attend to public business in Parliament without danger to his life. But he pledged

* Mr. Wilberforce had requested Mr. Buxton to undertake this matter, in a letter dated February 18. 1825, adding, "I know I need not apologise to you for the trouble I impose on you, in the residuary legatee capacity. You are likely to have a very unprofitable inheritance, if it be estimated according to the ordinary principles of valuing articles. But their *sterling value* will be recognised by and by."

himself, if alive in the next session, to accept the challenge of the honourable Baronet.* However, in the course of the summer, the commissioners returned, and their report rendered any further exertion unnecessary. In spite of the great difficulties by which they had been surrounded (for the inhabitants had banded themselves together in a sort of conspiracy, to prevent any evidence from being laid before them), they had established the fact of the Mauritius slave trade, and to a great degree ascertained its extent; and they clearly proved that this trade had continued in full vigour, except during the administration of General Hall.

On August 23. 1829, Mr. Spring Rice, whose co-operation in this question had been in the highest degree valuable, writes to Mr. Buxton:—

"My principal object in writing respects the Mauritius case. In the first place, let me congratulate you on the complete vindication of yourself contained in the Report. But what course is next year to be taken? If a committee, you may depend on my best help, night and day, if necessary; but only on the condition of being authorised by Mrs. Buxton to watch you as attentively as the Inquiry, and to send you packing, if I see the matter press on your health or spirits. Pray tell Mrs. Buxton to furnish me with full powers over you, or otherwise I shall never go down. Also let me know what are your plans, and what I ought to fag at during the recess. All this assumes a committee to be the fitting course; but I have my doubts, now that the case is launched, whether a commission† in the islands is not a better mode of procedure. Turn this in your mind, and consult Lushington and Brougham; I think Murray is deserving of every confidence."

The following letter was Mr. Buxton's reply to a suggestion from Mr. Horace Twiss (Under-Secretary for the

* See Mirror of Parliament, June 3. 1829.

† i. e. an *executive* commission.

Colonies), that he should leave the matter in the hands of Government.

"Northrepps Hall, Cromer,
October 21. 1829.

"My dear Twiss,

"Upon the most deliberate consideration I am afraid it is impossible for me to adopt your suggestion. I originally stated that the slave trade prevailed during Sir Robert Farquhar's government. Ill health prevented me from bringing forward, in the session of 1827, the proofs I possessed. In 1828, I took no steps, except that I offered to Mr. Huskisson to put the Government in possession of my case, as I was unable to go on with it. He declined my offer, but told me that it was Sir R. Farquhar's intention to require me either to retract my statements, or to proceed with the investigation. My reply was that I would retract nothing, and that if I were thus called on, I would, at any personal inconvenience, move for a committee.

"I heard no more of the question in 1828. At the latter end of last session, Sir Robert thought proper to make precisely the same demand as that of which Mr. Huskisson had warned me. I could do no less than accept the challenge, and declare that I would bring forward the question in the next session. If I were now to decline doing so, Sir R. Farquhar would stand in the best possible situation; charges were made against him —he had in Parliament defied his accuser to produce the proof —that accuser had pledged himself to do so, and had not performed his pledge: in short he would obtain a triumph, and that at my expense.

"Now, considering that the commissioners have proved beyond a doubt that slave trading *did* exist during his government, and considering that I have irresistible proof of all I have asserted, and of much more than I ever did state, this would not be to me a very eligible termination of the controversy.

"I have entered into this long explanation, in order to satisfy you that I am placed in a situation by Sir R. Farquhar's challenge, which leaves me no alternative but to proceed.

"I confess to you that, as far as he is concerned, I do so with the greatest reluctance. I have no enmity against him; and I should be very glad to be spared the task of being his accuser. Of this the best proof I can give is, that I should be ready, at this moment, to abandon the inquiry, with a full sense that I

expose myself to severe reflections, provided I could do so without sacrificing the interests of others. The slave trade did prevail; that is not disputed: every negro thus illegally brought into the colony, is by law free. Consequently, before I shall be justified in abandoning the inquiry, I ought to know that Government will take efficient measures for restoring freedom to these persons. Secondly, I can prove that the slaves at the Mauritius have been treated with unparalleled cruelty. I cannot abandon their case till I have security that Government will take decided measures for improving their condition. Thirdly, my motive for taking up the question, was a desire to suppress the slave trade. Before I can quit the subject, it must be proved to me that the slave trade is extinct, and that it cannot, in all human probability, be revived.

"Surely there is nothing in these requests to which the Government can make any objection. They must be as anxious as I am that no persons shall be held in illegal bondage in a British Colony,—that extreme cruelty should be prevented,—and that the slave trade should be suppressed. I say again, if these public objects can be accomplished, I shall take leave of the question, caring little whether my contest with Sir Robert Farquhar ends with credit to me or without it."

To Mrs. Buxton.

"February 5. 1830.

"I have had another interview with Sir George Murray this morning; and I am heartily grieved and heartily angry that he is not prepared to act as I wish about the Mauritius. It is not, however, settled; he is to give me a final answer in a few days. Is not this horrible? I am, however, well, and in good spirits, believing that, though there be the arm of flesh on one side, there is a stronger arm on the other."

Mr. Buxton was, however, spared any lengthened exertions on this subject. The unexpected death of Sir Robert Farquhar put an end to that part of the Mauritian controversy that related to him, and in the spring of 1830, the Government, convinced by the report of the commission, declared their willingness to take up the main question with vigour.

To Edward Byam, Esq.

"My dear Byam, "London, April 30. 1830.

"After repeated disappointments, Lushington, Spring Rice, and I saw Sir George Murray to-day. *He admitted, in the most unequivocal terms,* that slave trading to a *vast extent* had prevailed at the Mauritius, and that *all our statements had been well founded.*

"I urged a committee for the purpose of putting our evidence on record. He maintained that it was unnecessary, *as the Government admitted, and no one denied, all I wished.*

"He is to take measures to liberate all slaves illegally imported, and Lushington approves the plan by which this is to be done.

"When he had made all these admissions, I then said that the time was come in which those who had been injured and ruined * for no other crime than that they had not connived at the slave trade, ought to be indemnified. I gave him your letter, and bore the same testimony, or even stronger, to your character than I did in my letter to you. He promised to read your letter. I then turned the conversation to General Hall, and expressed the opinion I have always entertained of his noble conduct, and intimated that some public notice should be taken of it, or, at the very least, that it should be admitted that he was right in all he did. I do not despair of seeing this done by Murray."

The labour bestowed by Mr. Buxton and his friends on this subject, was thus crowned with complete success. Long unnoticed and unchecked by the Government at home, the evil had grown up and flourished; but it withered in a day. Those who had readily joined in it, while veiled from sight, now shrunk from the light which

* Mr. Byam had been deprived of his situation as Commissary-General of Police, in consequence of his activity in suppressing the slave trade. General Hall, who, when Governor, had distinguished himself by his exertions for the same end, had also suffered severely from the misrepresentations of the colonists.

fell upon their doings. At the same time new vigour was thrown into every department of the executive; and thus the remnants of the trade in slaves were soon extinguished. It only remained to make reparation to those who had been its victims. Sir George Murray had agreed to the proposition, that every slave in the Mauritius should be set free whose master could not prove a title to his possession; but Lord Goderich, who at this time succeeded Sir G. Murray in office, insisted on laying the *onus probandi*, not upon the master, but on the slave; a difference and a hardship of no small magnitude.

Notwithstanding, a considerable number of slaves were able to prove that they had been illegally imported, and accordingly obtained their freedom. The business was wound up in 1830; but when those that had undertaken it came to settle their affairs, a circumstance occurred to which Mr. Buxton often referred with strong expressions of admiration. Mr. George Stephen had taken a deep interest in the case when it was first mooted. He was afterwards retained as the professional assistant of its parliamentary advocates; and in this capacity had incurred a very heavy expense of money, labour, and time. Of the remuneration justly due to him, amounting to 2000*l.*, he refused to receive any part.

We cannot conclude this brief outline of the "Mauritius Case" without some allusion to another of the gentlemen who acted a prominent part in the drama. Mr. Jeremie, who had been Chief Justice of St. Lucia, had there ruined his prospects by the boldness with which he struggled against the ill treatment of the slaves. Ardent in his abhorrence of wrong and cruelty, singularly wanting in selfish prudence, he never cared what might befall him, while pushing forward what he

felt to be right; but in planning he was too hasty, in action too impetuous, for complete success.

This gentleman returned from St. Lucia at the very time when the Government had determined to appoint protectors of slaves in the four Crown Colonies. It struck Mr. Buxton, that he had just the resolute boldness and principle which a public officer in the Mauritius would most especially need. Upon his making the suggestion, however, Mr. Jeremie replied that he had already suffered enough. "Nothing," said he, "shall induce me to go to a slave colony again." "Why," said Mr. Buxton; "it signifies very little whether you are killed or not; but it signifies very much whether the right man goes to the Mauritius or not, at this juncture." Mr. Jeremie smiled and went away; but he came back the next day, and said, "I have been carefully thinking over what you said yesterday; and I have fully made up my mind that it is better I should be sacrificed than not have the thing done as it ought to be. Therefore, I am ready to go;" and he accordingly applied for and obtained the appointment of Procureur Général.

The undertaking was no light one. So hateful to the planters was the character in which he came, that he could not even land without encountering resistance; and during the short time he remained ashore, he was harassed and withstood at every turn; abuse and insult were lavished upon him; his life was repeatedly threatened, and even attempted. He was at last obliged to take refuge on board a man-of-war in the harbour; but he still continued to perform the functions of his office; till at length the Governor, Sir Charles Colville, considered himself under the necessity of appeasing the people by commanding him to leave the island. No sooner, however, did he reach England, than, to his

great delight, he received orders to return at once, with an increased military force, and to resume his office. He returned, and, assisted by Mr. Reddie, the President of one of the Courts, recommenced his plans for the defence of the negro. Again, however, the popular clamour rose, and threatened the peace, if not the safety, of the island; and he was finally recalled, and reached England at the beginning of the year 1835.

CHAPTER XV.

1829, 1830.

LETTERS.—PAPERS.—MITIGATION OF THE PENAL CODE.—ILLNESS AND DEATH OF HIS SECOND SON.

MR. BUXTON'S own health was much restored during the winter of 1829; but illness in his family caused him severe anxiety. On leaving home, when this was in a great measure relieved, he writes: —

"Spitalfields, Nine o'clock at Night,
November 25. 1829.

"I was very sorry that I was only able to write that short, shabby letter, which I sent this morning. I never before felt my heart so entirely riveted to home; everything else seems flat, except that centre of my affections.

"But now for a history of my travels. Nurse and I were very good friends, and had some instructive conversation upon the pleasing subjects of wounds, operations, &c.; and I presume I won her heart, as she began and concluded every sentence with, 'My dear Sir.' I lapsed, however, at last, into my books. It was a wretched night; but I was none the worse for that, as my great coat and snow shoes kept me from cold. I soon set myself to a review of late events, and that led me to go over my list of the mercies which have been granted to me; and a grand list it appears. When I go over it item by item, the account seems surprisingly large. Mercies of all sorts. * * * Then, children to my heart's content; brothers and sisters the same; friends the same; station in life and circumstances the same; the public objects to which I have been directed the same; and there are fifty other dittos of the same order. Then my own life, so often preserved, and my children, given to me, as it were, a second time. I read some lines lately in one of those wicked newspapers (as —— called them), the Weekly Dis-

patch, which I must get hold of again. I forget the lines; but their substance was, that ere long Death shall open his casket; and they end thus:—

'Then shall I see my jewels to my joy, my jewels me.'

"Then come personal mercies of the same sort. I have clear, undoubting views of the efficacy of prayer. I know the Holy Spirit will be granted to those who ask for it, and I see wonderful mercy, love, and grandeur developed throughout all creation; and I know that I have a Redeemer. Upon these grounds, and such as these, I am thoroughly thankful, or rather I perceive that I ought to be so.

"These thoughts, and hearty prayers for us all, with a fond recollection of the dear invalids I had left, carried me to Ipswich; and after that I cannot give a very clear account of anything, having fallen sound asleep. The snow became so deep that we were obliged to part with the guard and the bags, who rattled away in a postchaise and four, while we crawled into the fog of this great town. I dressed at the brewery; went to Lombard Street, to Macaulay's, and to the Anti-slavery meeting (we are to meet again at Brougham's on Friday evening, I believe; so forgive me for not giving you the history of our proceedings); then to Dr. Lushington, then to the Real del Monte, then to dinner at the London Tavern, by myself, then to the meeting about the Indian widows, from which I have just returned.

"I am really eager to know whether the storm produced any wrecks: I trust it did not; or if it did, that Anna Gurney saved the crew, and is now subjecting them to a second and a greater peril, from repletion at the Cottage. Then the whale, then Cromer Hall*, then Mrs. Fry. Why, what a wonderful place Cromer is! This big city cannot supply half as much real important news as little Cromer can furnish.

"Your affectionate husband, father, brother, and friend,

"T. Fowell Buxton."

Again, during a second visit to London:—

"I had a pleasant journey, going outside as far as Bury, for the purpose of satisfying myself with surveying the stars. I

* This refers to incidents which had recently occurred: the capture of a large whale, and a fire at Cromer Hall.

never was out on a finer night, or was more sensible of the majesty of the spectacle. A man must preach very well indeed before he conveys such a lesson of the greatness of God, and the unworthiness of man, as a view of the heavens discloses. It always strikes me that such a sight turns into downright ridicule and laughter our (in our own eyes) important pursuits."

The same subject is referred to in the following entry, made about this time in his commonplace book:—

"O God, whether we look to the mighty operations of thy hands, the millions of sums which thou hast made, or to the swarms of living things which fill every space, whose curious and delicate organisation is the work of thy hands, or remember that it is thou who satisfiest the desire of every living thing, still the same truth bursts upon us — thou art almighty and all good. Thou art goodness, and majesty, and infinity. Then, what madness is it in us to rebel against thy laws! what madness to commit offences under the eye of such a master! what madness not to centre our hopes, our joys, our affections, in one so good and so great; Let me say, O righteous Father, the world hath not known thee, but I have known thee. Let me not be as those who have eyes and see not, ears and hear not, hearts and understand not; but let me have the wisdom, the heaven-sent wisdom, to trace thee in all things; and because I trace thee, to love thee, fear thee, obey thee, and worship thee with my whole heart."

"January 1. 1830.

"I feel gratitude to God, that, with all our imperfections and sins, we have in some degree been constant in prayer, and have tasted its sweetness; that we have more diligently than formerly read His book, and in some degree found that His words they are spirit and they are life.

"And now what do I desire to pray for? Thy promise, O Lord, stands clear and plain — there is no ambiguity; it is certain that, desiring and praying for thy Holy Spirit, we shall obtain it. Surely I do desire and do pray for it. 'Shall not our heavenly Father give his Holy Spirit to those who ask it?' It is certain that He will. I know not but that death may arrest my hand while I write this sentence. I know not that

the world and all who inhabit it shall survive this day; but I do know that God, who cannot lie, has promised and will give His Holy Spirit to me, who now earnestly and humbly pray for it. That is one secure possession which accident cannot destroy, nor time wear away, nor the malice of Satan snatch from me.

"(2 Peter, iii. 10.) The heavens may pass away, the elements melt, the earth be burned up, but the immutable promise of my God has granted and secured to me His Holy Spirit; what consolation to know one irrevocable truth, and that truth essential to our happiness! Then let that Holy Spirit come, come to my heart, and with great power.

"(Eph. iii. 16.) Let it strengthen me with might in the inner man; let it feed me with the bread of life; let it erase that which is ungodly, that which is earthly, that which has a perishable foundation; let it lift my soul to God; let it open to me the love, the goodness, the majesty of God; let it teach salvation through a Saviour, and let it welcome the glad tidings to my heart.

"(John, xvi. 13.) Let it guide me into all truth; let it sow the good seed; let it prepare the soul for the reception of that good seed, water it, and nourish it, and bless it with large increase. O God, for the sake of Christ Jesus, hear this prayer. Give me, O Lord, unreserved confidence in thee.

"(Rom. iv. 20.) As Abraham staggered not at the promises of God through unbelief, but was strong in faith, giving glory to God, so may I be thus strong, and confident, and fully persuaded that what thou hast promised thou art able to perform.

"(Eph. iii. 17.) And now my chief desire and prayer is, that Christ may dwell in my heart through faith.

"(John, vi. 56.) We in Christ, and Christ in us.

"(Eph. iv. 15.) That I may grow up into him in all things.

"(Col. ii. 7.) Rooted and built up in him.

"(John, xv. 5.) That I may be the branch and He the vine; and that that branch of that vine may bring forth much fruit. That I may be among that flock, of which He is the Shepherd; among that people, of whom He is the King; and among those blessed, whose verdict shall be, 'Enter thou into the joy of thy Lord.'

"(John, iv. 14. and vi. 33.) That I may drink of that well of water which springeth up unto everlasting life, and eat of that

bread which cometh down from heaven, and giveth life unto the world.

"(2 Sam. xxii. 2.) Be thou my rock, and my fortress, and my Deliverer; the God of my rock, my shield, my high tower, my refuge, my Saviour; and knowing that my Redeemer liveth, and from what deep perdition He hath rescued me and to what heights of glory He hath called me.

"(Eph. iv. 1.) Let me, enable me to walk worthy of my vocation.

"(Phil. i. 2.) May grace and peace from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ be granted. No resolutions of mine, no strength of the flesh can guard me from the power of sin. But may He in whom there is all strength protect me; He in whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge, teach me and lead me through all the dangerous paths of my life."

To Mrs. Buxton.

"London, February 9. 1830.

"I am in good spirits and health, and not without a sense that mercy and truth and love are about me in my solitude before you come. * * * What a comfort it is to me that you are all going on well! It seems to make all other things easy and light. I have my worries, but I do not regard them. As for the affairs of the mines, which just now are a bit of a torment, I depend upon it that it will come right; and as to public matters, they are not at my disposal: I can only do my best, and leave the result to Him, to whom those good causes belong."

The mining companies alluded to above, to which he belonged, involved him in considerable loss of property, and their affairs were often a subject of anxiety to him. The details would be of course unsuitable and uninteresting to the general reader; but those who had the opportunity of observing his conduct in these transactions, attest that it eminently displayed his clear judgment, his firmness of purpose, his ability to resist the infection of panic, and his diligent and generous regard to the interests of others.

Another matter of business that occupied him during this spring was the Bill for throwing open the beer trade, to which he thus alludes: —

To Joseph John Gurney, Esq.

"House of Commons, March 19. 1830.

"I am far from being dissatisfied with the beer revolution. In the first place, I do not know how to be so; I have always voted for free trade when the interests of others were concerned, and it would be awkward to change when my own are in jeopardy. Secondly, I believe in the principles of free trade, and expect that they will do us good in the long run, though the immediate loss may be large. Thirdly, I have long expected the change. And, lastly, I am pleased to have an opportunity of proving that our real monopoly is one of skill and capital! *

"I have a letter from Calcutta, saying that Suttee has been suppressed by Lord William Bentinck. Is not this comforting. I am also not without hopes that Sir G. Murray will do right about my Mauritius slaves. * * * Peel tells me he is with us about Capital Punishments, but says, 'you must give me time.' On slavery nothing new. Colonists will do nothing. I am strongly in favour of bolder measures on the part of the Abolitionists, and think they will be taken.

"I am now attending, and (as you may observe) listening to a debate on the distress of the nation, meaning to vote against the conspiracy of high Tories and Radical Whigs, and in favour of Government."

Our readers will recollect the efforts made in 1821 and the following years for the reform of the Penal Code. Sir James Mackintosh had continually kept the subject in view, and had made various attempts, but apparently without success, till Mr. Peel, after taking office in 1826, commenced his revisal of the Code. He cleared the

* Referring some years afterwards to the enormous sum which the twelve largest breweries in London had lost by this Beer Bill, he remarked "But it was right; it broke in upon a rotten part of our system — I am *glad* they amputated us!"

statute-book of many obsolete and barbarous acts, and arranged and consolidated the whole body of Criminal Laws. In the progress of this great work, Mr. Peel introduced in the year 1830 a Bill for the consolidation of the laws relating to forgery. He, however, retained the punishment of death in several cases, and on this point a strong opposition was raised in Parliament, whilst, out of the House, Mr. Sidney Taylor effected a change in public opinion, through the columns of the 'Morning Herald.' It had long been Mr. Buxton's opinion that death for injury to property was adverse to the interests as well as to the feelings of the commercial world in England. It happened that one Sunday morning during this period he was visited at breakfast by Mr. John Barry, who suggested the extreme importance of getting this feeling formally expressed; Mr. Buxton, while continuing his breakfast, dictated the following petition:—

"That your Petitioners, as bankers, are deeply interested in the protection of property from forgery, and in the conviction and punishment of persons guilty of that crime.

"That your petitioners find, by experience, that the infliction of death, or even the possibility of the infliction of death, prevents the prosecution, conviction, and punishment of the criminal, and thus endangers the property which it is intended to protect.

"That your petitioners, therefore, earnestly pray that your Honourable House will not withhold from them that protection to their property which they could derive from a more lenient law."

This form of petition was sent to all the principal towns in the kingdom, and quickly obtained the signatures of firms representing above 1000 bankers.

It was presented on the 24th May, by Mr. Brougham. Sir James Mackintosh's amendment to abolish capital

punishment for forgery was, however, lost; but immediately after this defeat Mr. Buxton returned into the House, and gave notice (in the name of Sir James Mackintosh) of another motion to the same effect on a further stage of the Bill. On this debate a majority was obtained against the punishment of death for forgery; and, though this decision was reversed by the House of Lords, the question was virtually settled. No execution has since taken place for forgery in Great Britain.

In succeeding years the infliction of capital penalties was more and more reduced by the efforts of Mr. Ewart, Mr. Lennard, and others, to whose exertions Mr. Buxton always gave, while he remained in Parliament, his strenuous assistance; and it is satisfactory to know that the number of crimes now legally punishable with death is reduced from 230 to eight or nine; and that, practically, no executions now take place in England or Wales except for murder or attempts to murder.

At the close of this summer, Mr. Buxton was called away from his public duties by the illness of his second son, a youth of great promise, who showed a tendency to consumption.* When the disease suddenly assumed a very alarming character, Mr. Buxton writes, after detailing the circumstances:—

"I felt in the night a deep sense of the goodness of God, and unbounded confidence in Him, and was ready to place my child and everything in His hands.

"I awoke in the morning under an overwhelming load of distress; the wretchedness of our present situation burst upon me before I had time to collect my consolations. * * * My

* Mrs. Fry thus mentions him in her diary: "He was a child who in no common degree appeared to live in the fear and love of the Lord: he was cheerful, industrious, clever, very agreeable, and of a sweet person."—(Memoirs, vol. ii. p. 118.)

prayer was, first, heartfelt thanks to God for His goodness and mercy; an acknowledgment that He had dealt most lovingly with us in every, every event; an assurance that this stroke, terrible as it seemed, was mercy and love; and I thanked him for it. Next did I cordially thank him for Harry's state of mind, so sweet and lovely: thanked him that he was evidently a lamb of Christ's fold, and prayed that he might be strengthened with might in the inner man. * * * The text, 'these light afflictions, which are but for a moment,' was deeply comforting. Positively, they are heavy, and grievous, and lasting; but compared with the joys of heaven, light, and but for a moment. The apostle must indeed have been inspired when he formed so sublime a conception of God's presence.

"My prayer is, that I may never forget this day's lesson. How have I felt the vanity of all earthly things! How have I panted to become meet for an eternal inheritance! How have I desired for myself, my wife, my children, my friends, that we might here be the servants of God, desiring nothing but to do His will: and that hereafter we might form one band of happy ones redeemed by Christ, and enjoying that blessed country, the least of whose privileges is, that 'there they are no more sick!'

"I pray thee, most merciful Father, that the lesson of to-day may not be forgotten; that we may ever retain to-day's sense of the difference between temporal and eternal. I pray thee only make us thy children, and deal with us as thou wilt. I give my son unto thy merciful arms; if thou wilt, dear Saviour, thou canst make him whole; but thou knowest best, thy will be done. If it be possible, reserve him for us: oh, how does the flesh desire it! but far, far more do I desire that thou wouldst keep him and us within thy fold. Thou didst hear parents, prayers on earth, oh, hear us now; but again I feel, thy will be done. I bow with entire confidence to thy decrees; I am sure that thou wilt do for the best, for never so much as to-day did I know thee to be merciful and gracious, and very loving to all thy creatures."

The most lively solicitude and the most sedulous attention proved to be alike in vain. Though the progress of the disease was extremely slow, it was unremit-

ting, and the nursing of this beloved child became the engrossing occupation of the autumn. The following paper shows that hope had faded away.

"September 19. 1830.

"I beseech thee, O God, the Creator of the universe, that thou wouldst grant me a much more lively spirit of godliness, as the one thing which sweetens life, soothes its cares and its bitter disappointments, and which cheers me in a path which needs something to cheer it. Blessed Lord, hear my prayers on behalf of my beloved child. Oh, how do I desire, how earnestly do I crave that thy choicest mercies and the treasures of thy love may be showered upon him! Give him, as he walks through the valley of the shadow of death, the light of thy countenance, the support of thy strength, and the comfort of his heavenly Father's presence. May it please thee to impart to him, flying fast to heaven, a foretaste of the joys which thou hast prepared. The time of tribulation and the hour of death are approaching. Oh, be near him and us in those dark seasons; tell him that thou art beside him, whisper full consolation in his ear. Let thy spirit remind him that he is safe in thy arms, that nothing can really harm him because thou art his defender. Unto God's gracious mercy and protection I commit my darling child; the Lord bless him and keep him, lift up his countenance upon him, and give him peace; and, O blessed Lord, make us partakers of the same peace. If, as we believe, in passing from death unto life he shall experience a blessed change; if he is about to enter into the joy of his Lord; if bright scenes of glory, which the dull eye of man hath not seen, are to be his; if he is to spring from languor, and pain, and weariness of the flesh, to perfect peace and joy; if this be the change that awaits him, and surely it is, then let us patiently, nay joyfully, transfer him from the arms of earthly parents into the arms of his Father which is in heaven."

Being obliged to go up to London on the day succeeding that on which this prayer is dated, Mr. Buxton writes in a more cheerful strain to the young invalid:—

"Newmarket, Sept. 20.

"Here I am, my dear Harry, and I will make use of my pen while tea is brewing. I have had a pleasant journey. To be sure I could not read, for it grew dark about the time we got to Pearson's; but though I could not read out of a book, I read all the better a sermon out of the stars; and a noble sermon it was, beginning—'The heavens declare the glory of God;' and it ended thus, 'What is man, that thou art mindful of him?' One part of the sermon I recollect:—'Vanity, vanity, says the preacher, *all* is vanity.—Nay, there, Solomon, with all your wisdom, you are wrong! It may be vanity to pursue pleasure, to gratify appetite, or to hunt after renown. It may be vanity to buy fine houses, preserve pheasants, plant trees, acquire an estate with the hills from the Lighthouse to Weybourne for a boundary; but it is *not* vanity, it is excellent good sense, to serve with the heart and soul, and might and main, the Master and Creator of those heavens: it is *not* vanity to conquer evil passions, and stifle unholy repinings: it is *not* vanity, to be patient and submissive, gentle and cheerful, during a long and weary season of trial: it is *not* vanity, in the midst of trials and privations, to spread around a loving and a holy influence, so that the sufferer becomes the teacher and the comforter; comforting us and teaching us that unsafe we cannot be, while we are in the arms of a most merciful and tender Father.' So said the preacher to whom I was listening, and many other things he said which I forget at this moment, but I recollect he wound up one paragraph thus—'Look at that cluster of stars, conceive the power which framed, and the wisdom which guides them, and then say, if you can,—I am able to improve upon His dispensations; I can change His decrees for the better; not His will, but mine be done!' But the tea is getting cold, so I will say no more about the sermon, except that the preacher drew a most striking and lucid likeness of Northrepps, painting to the life each member of the family; so graphic were his touches, that I never felt more strongly what a blessing it is to belong to it. When we had done with the Hall, he sketched the Cottage, and in the gravest manner possible gave a sly hit or two, which made me smile in the midst of my approval. But now I must conclude. May the God of hope preserve you in all peace; help, cheer, enliven, strengthen you, and gladden

you with the consolations which come from Jesus Christ our Lord! Good night, dear Harry, and all at Northrepps."

The Rev. Charles Simeon to T. Fowell Buxton, Esq.

"My dear Sir, "November 4.

"I beg leave to thank you for a most munificent present of game. It has come most welcome in point of time, but doubly welcome as a remembrance from you, for whom I have so long entertained a most affectionate regard. I may even say, that the very affliction which you are now suffering greatly endears it to me. Sympathy under such circumstances is both heightened and refined; because I am made to feel, that, whilst your domestic trouble might well engross your every thought, you can yet extend to a distant friend your kindness in a matter of such minor importance. In truth, it is by the furnace that Jehovah usually purges away our dross; and if we come out of it purified, we have reason to acknowledge our afflictions as blessings in disguise. To you, who during the sitting of Parliament are so much occupied with public affairs, it is a peculiar blessing to hear the 'still small voice' of God at home, and to have a season for self-examination, and for communion, deep communion with your own heart; and in seeing death making its inroads upon your dearest relatives, you are brought, I doubt not, to contemplate its gradual approach to yourself, and, I trust, to be thankful that your time has been protracted to the present hour, that you may be more fully prepared to meet its stroke. Above all, I rejoice to hear of the state of your son's mind. Yes; let him only commit himself into the Saviour's hands, and his joy shall indeed be both intense and lasting! With my affectionate regards to him and Mrs. Buxton,

"I remain, most truly yours,

"CHARLES SIMEON."

While Mr. Buxton most acutely felt the sorrow of this calamity, he was no less alive to the consolations afforded him. "It is most painful," he said to a friend one day on leaving the sick room, "it is most painful, and yet most full of comfort. As painful as it can be, and as comfortable as it can be." The same spirit breathes in a letter to Dr. Philip at Cape Town.

"Northrepps Hall, November 10. 1830.

"My dear Friend,

"I must not let my wife's and daughter's letters go without a line to tell you that I have very sincerely sympathised with you in the trials to which you have been exposed. I am sure your stout spirit needs not encouragement; but it may be a satisfaction to you to know that your friends on this side of the water look upon you as convicted of a crime—of putting an end to the slavery of the Hottentots. That is your real offence; for this the friends of slavery meditate your ruin: but they will find themselves mistaken. We, too, lay our claim to a share of that guilt, and we shall pay the penalty.*

"I think you need not trouble yourself at all about the fine or the costs; and as for shame and disgrace, &c., I would take a thousand times as much to have written a book which has done so much good, and think it a capital bargain. Pray take ample vengeance on the enemy by exposing all kinds of oppression. Do twice as much as you meditated.

'Tu ne cede malis, sed contrà audentior ito.'

"We are, as you will see by the newspapers, in a state of convulsion and alarm: I believe it to be imaginary, and that the only real danger arises from our own fears.

"Perhaps domestic griefs make me insensible to those of a public nature. My poor boy is at the gates of death. To-day we took the Sacrament together. I think it hardly possible for any father to sustain a greater loss; but then no father can have greater consolation. As a little child leans upon his mother, so our dear Harry leans upon his Saviour. He knows the event which is coming, and is prepared to meet it with entire serenity. He is truly 'walking through the valley of the shadow of death' and, as truly, 'he fears no evil.' Excuse me for saying so much on a subject which engrosses all our thoughts. You be will happy to hear that his poor mother, notwithstanding unceasing nursing, confinement, and anxiety, is tolerably well; a great mercy, and one among a multitude which are granted to us.

* Dr. Philip has been fined by a court at the Cape for some of his expressions in the "Researches," which were condemned as libellous of the colony.

"Our slavery concerns go on well; the religious public has, at last, taken the field. The West Indians have done us good service. They have of late flogged slaves in Jamaica for praying, and imprisoned the missionaries, and they have given the nation to understand that preaching and praying are offences not to be tolerated in a slave colony. That is right — it exhibits slavery in its true colours — it enforces your doctrine, that, if you wish to teach religion to slaves, the first thing is, to put down slavery.

"I have 100, perhaps 150 petitions waiting for me in London, but I do not leave home at present. When another election arrives, and if we have a change of ministry, which may come soon, the subject will be more thought of than it has been: but I must go to my afflicted wife. May God be merciful to you and bless you, and lift up the light of His countenance upon you.

"Your sincere and affectionate friend,

"THOMAS FOWELL BUXTON."

Under every mitigation which intense parental solicitude could supply, the invalid sank peacefully, and died in the 17th year of his age, on the 18th of November. He was buried in a retired spot within the ruined chancel of Overstrand Church. Upon a tablet is inscribed his name, with that of his brother and his four young sisters, who had died previously; and the following lines written by his father: —

"Full of bright promise, youthful, courteous, brave;
Grace in the form, mind beaming from the eye;
All that a mother's fondest wish could crave
Were lent awhile by Heav'n, and here they lie.

"Here lies the wreck, the spirit wings her flight, —
The ransom'd spirit, to the realms above;
Ranges unfetter'd through the fields of light;
Rests in the bosom of eternal love;

"Beholds the unnumber'd host of angel powers,
Who, round Jehovah's throne, their anthems sing,
And joins that kindred band, those lovely flow'rs,
Cut down and wither'd in their early spring.

"Scenes by no tear disturb'd, no sin defil'd,
Scenes nor by heart conceiv'd, nor tongue confess'd,
Unveil'd to thee, dear spirit of our child;—
And we are comforted, for thou art bless'd."

Two papers written by Mr. Buxton in the course of the ensuing winter may conclude this history.

"Northrepps, January 9. 1831.

"The Lord Jesus Christ be with my spirit; grace be with me. This is my prayer for the year. May Christ be with me and mine—may the Holy Spirit of God be my constant guide, guardian, comforter, and teacher. Thou knowest, O Lord, what depths of sorrow and bitter anxiety the last year has produced. Thou knowest that we have gone mourning all the year long, and yet have we to thank thee for some of the choicest mercies we ever received. We have parted with a beloved child, who was all that our hearts could desire; but if he left our arms, he was received in thine; no doubt hangs over his blessedness, and I thank thee for this. My heart is grateful for the certainty that he is now in heaven. Thanks that he was spared extreme pain; thanks that he was not wearied out by his sufferings; thanks that he descended to the grave with so many glorious manifestations of thy love! And, O Lord, may it be my unceasing desire and aim to reach the same blessed haven: may it be the province of thy Spirit to deliver me from all that might obstruct my salvation. May I view sin with detestation, because it is offensive to thee, my gracious Lord; and again with detestation, because that, and that alone, can mar my prospects of going where my dearest Harry is gone before. Teach me then, O Lord, to subdue the flesh, to resist the devil, to live wholly to my God; and may that blessed Saviour who came into the world to save sinners, redeem and ransom one who pretends to no grounds of hope, who rejects all pleas of safety except through the merits of that same Saviour Jesus Christ."

"Northrepps, January 30. 1831.

"I feel this morning more than usual dejection, partly occasioned perhaps by the prospect of leaving this quiet place on Tuesday next, and plunging once more into the distracting cares and hurries of Parliament and business; but still more by a most painful picture which suddenly burst upon me yesterday.

I took the boys, Edward, Edmund, and the two Upchers, to shoot on the Warren hills opposite the coast. The ground was covered with snow, the sea was dark and fretful. I went along the lower side, and turned up one of the most distant hillocks, and there I placed myself. And then in a moment a picture burst upon me, which made this one of the most melancholy moments of the last melancholy year. On that same hillock, about the same day two years back, I stood. Nature seemed as if she had not changed. The same surface of white beneath my feet, the sea bearing the same blackening aspect, the game-keepers and dogs in the same hollow, and the boys exhibiting the same eagerness; all was the same with one sorrowful exception. Dearest Harry was nearest to me on the former occasion; his quick eye perceived a wild duck sailing near the sea, and we observed it alighting in a pond near the farm below us. I sent him, full of life and alacrity as he was, to secure the bird, while I stood and watched his manœuvres to get within shot unobserved. Then again his exulting return with the bird in his hand, and the pleasure I felt at his pleasure—and now I could see nothing but the churchyard where his bones repose. Dear fellow! how large a portion of my hope and joy lies there: how has the world changed with me since that joyful hour! But there is this comfort, if we are left to sad recollections, he is gone to eternal security and peace.

CHAPTER XVI.

SLAVERY. 1830.

THE PUBLIC BEGINS TO AROUSE ITSELF. — INCREASING POPULARITY OF THE SUBJECT. — GRADUAL CHANGE IN THE VIEWS OF THE LEADERS. — MITIGATING MEASURES DESPAIRED OF. — DETERMINATION TO PUT DOWN SLAVERY THOROUGHLY AND AT ONCE. — SPIRITED MEETINGS IN LONDON AND EDINBURGH. — THE GOVERNMENT OUTSTRIPPED BY THE ABOLITIONISTS. — MR. BUXTON'S APPEAL TO THE ELECTORS. — THE CRUELTY OF SLAVERY IN ITS MILDEST FORM.

DURING the last three years the leaders of the Anti-slavery movement had been forced into comparative repose; but the movement itself went on. The nation was turning its attention more and more to the question of slavery; inquiring into its true nature, and receiving impressions from the facts and arguments brought forward in the "Anti-slavery Reporter," and other publications.

A few years before, the idea of emancipation had been odious both to Parliament and to the people. "If," said Mr. Buxton, in 1827, "a man had a large share of reputation, he would lose the greater part of it by espousing the cause of the slaves; if he had a moderate share he would lose all: and that is my case." At that time he wrote to Mr. Macaulay: —

"God grant you, my dear friend, good health and good spirits; I, like you, have my share of slander. To-day I have received a letter from Joseph John Gurney, telling me the reports he has heard against me, and from our friends too! No matter; if slander against individuals is the method our adversaries take of justifying slavery, they will have hard work in inventing lies before they succeed in silencing us."

But at the period we have reached, although in some quarters a clamorous spirit of opposition still prevailed, yet the Anti-slavery feeling had been steadily making way. The planters, in fact, by their invincible obstinacy, had chilled the sympathy with which many had been inclined to regard them. They had all along been playing a losing game. The Government would gladly have left the colonial legislatures to work out for themselves the needful reforms in their system; they had hurled back the quiet suggestions of the Government with every expression of defiance and contempt; they had punished the rebel negroes with a severity which shocked every feeling of humanity; they had condemned Smith to the gallows, and thus turned the Independents against them; they forced Shrewsbury to fly for his life, and the Wesleyans were aroused; the Baptist chapels were razed to the ground, and the Baptists became their enemies.

Mr. Buxton had early foreseen this result. In his speech on the persecutions of Mr. Shrewsbury, he exclaimed,—

"Proceed, then, faster and faster; you are doing our work; you are accelerating the downfall of slavery. A few more such triumphs, a few more such speaking testimonies to the merits of your system, and the people of England with one heart will abhor it, and with one voice will dissolve it."

While they were thus exasperating one class after another, the planters stimulated the exertions of their opponents by the vehement abuse which they poured out upon them. To their ceaseless charges of falsehood and hypocrisy, the Abolitionists replied by laying bare first one and then another feature of the system; and thus a series of impressions was made upon the public mind, which at length wrought a full conviction.

In 1830, these views which had been slowly expanding, suddenly put on a new and more definite form.

Like all who begin to climb towards great objects of attainment, Mr. Buxton had at first taken the lower eminences in the path before him to be the highest it would reach. At first he had not questioned that emancipation must be a disastrous boon to the blacks, unless previously trained to enjoy it. Thus in his opening speech, in 1823, he expressly said: —

"The object at which we aim is the extinction of slavery. Not, however, the rapid termination of that state — not the sudden emancipation of the negro, but such preparatory steps, such precautionary measures, as by slow degrees, and in the course of years, first fitting and qualifying the slave for the enjoyment of freedom, shall gently conduct us to the annihilation of slavery."

But this declaration had been made seven years before, when, to use his own words, "We did not know, as we now do, that all attempts at gradual abolition are utterly wild and visionary."*

Since that time the conduct of the colonists had plainly shown that there was no hope of the negroes being raised to a fitness for liberty *while they were still slaves*. This could not be done, at any rate, without the hearty co-operation of the planters; and all co-operation the planters had refused. Nay, even had they turned to the work of improving their human property, for the sake of having it taken from them, it may yet be questioned whether the inherent nature of the system would not have forbidden success. Either you must have compulsion, fruitful in abuses, and debasing to character, or you must have the natural and wholesome inducement of wages.

"Slavery," said Mr. Buxton, upon one occasion†, "is labour

* Mirror of Parliament, May 30. 1833. † Hansard, vol. xiii. p. 44.

extorted by force. Wages, the natural motive, are not given, but their place is supplied with the whip. In this House discussions frequently take place as to what slavery is, and what it is not; but one thing it is by the confession of all men — it is labour extorted by force. * * * Under the most mitigated system, slavery is still labour obtained by force; and, if by force, I know not how it is possible to stop short of that degree of force which is necessary to extort involuntary exertion. A motive there must be, and it comes at last to this: inducement or compulsion; wages or the whip."

The evil, then, being, from its very nature, incapable of much amelioration, and the planters thus set against all reform, it was time for the Anti-slavery leaders to relinquish the hope of making mitigation the first step to freedom. Not soon, nor without a struggle, was that hope given up; so plausible does the proposition seem, that "no people ought to be free till they are fit to use their freedom." "Yet this maxim," says a brilliant writer of our day, "is worthy of the fool in the old story, who resolved not to go into the water till he had learnt to swim. If men are to wait for liberty till they become wise and good in slavery, they may indeed wait for ever!"*

What, then, was to be done? Should things be left as they were? To Mr. Buxton the answer was plain. He held it to be sheer robbery for one man to hold in bondage the person of another; he thought it a crime in itself; he knew that its offspring was wrong and wickedness, and he could not shrink from the risk of doing it away.

The conviction that slavery could not be slowly modified, with a view to its ultimate extinction, but must be rooted out, and that speedily, wrought a thorough

* Macaulay's Essays, vol. i. p. 42. "Milton."

change in the policy of the Anti-slavery leaders. They had been lopping the branches; they now struck at the root. In 1823 they had sought to better the slave's condition, by lightening some of his burdens. In 1824, the plan was mooted for the purchase, emancipation, and apprenticeship of the negro children. The next three years were spent in discussions on Smith's death and the treatment of the rebel slaves; on the oppression of the free people of colour; on the non-admission of negro evidence; on Shrewsbury's banishment, and the destruction of his chapel. During 1828, 1829, and 1830, the Government had been still vainly striving to induce the colonial legislatures to begin the work of amelioration with their own hands. But a more stirring time was at hand. The Abolitionist party was grown too strong and zealous to shrink from any measures which its leaders might bring forward. In their minds bolder views had ripened, and needed only to be once spoken out in words, to become principles of action. In May, 1830, a crowded meeting assembled in Freemasons' Hall, with Mr. Wilberforce in the chair. The first resolution, moved by Mr. Buxton, expressed that "no proper or practicable means should be left unattempted for effecting at the earliest period the entire abolition of slavery throughout the British dominions." It was seconded by Lord Milton (now Earl Fitzwilliam), who had throughout supported the cause with all the weight of his station and character, though by so doing he had placed himself in opposition to the administration of which his father was a member. Other speeches and resolutions followed in the same strain, till at length Mr. Pownall rose to declare in a few vigorous words, that temporising measures ought at once to be abandoned. "The time," said he, "is come when we should speak out, and speak boldly, our deter-

mination — that slavery shall exist *no longer*." These words embodied the feeling which already pervaded the Anti-slavery party, and from this time immediate emancipation became its avowed object.

A meeting held in Edinburgh in the course of the same year, gave a further impulse to public feeling. After an eloquent address from Mr. (afterwards Lord) Jeffrey, urging the meeting to aim at nothing short of "abolishing slavery at the earliest practicable period," Dr. Andrew Thomson broke in with a vehement protest against any further pretexts for delay, exclaiming, "We ought to tell the legislature, plainly and strongly, that no man has a right to property in man, — that there are 800,000 individuals sighing in bondage, under the intolerable evils of West Indian slavery, who have as good a right to be free as we ourselves have, — that they ought to be free, and that they *must* be made free!"

These bold expressions excited such contending feelings, that the meeting broke up in confusion, but only to reassemble a few days later, when a most eloquent speech having been made by Dr. A. Thomson, a petition for immediate emancipation was adopted, to which 22,000 signatures were rapidly subscribed.

But while the Abolitionists were for pushing forwards, and doing what must be done, at once, the Government had no desire to accelerate its pace. It was still determined to plod on in the old track; its patience had not as yet been wearied out by the utter hopelessness of the task it had undertaken. It still hoped that the planters might be won over by gentle treatment. No doubt, they had baffled its plans, they had trampled under foot its suggestions; but it was still fain to humour their prejudices and put trust in their good intentions. If patience be a virtue, then was the Administration most

virtuous; with such fortitude did they submit to the sufferings of the slaves.

As the Government was thus standing still, while the Anti-slavery party was moving onwards, there could not but arise a breach between them; and accordingly from this time we find Mr. Buxton, not so much wrestling with the West Indians, as with the Government itself, and spurring it on to adopt decisive measures.

During the session of 1830, nothing of moment was effected, except that, on the 13th of July, Mr. Brougham obtained a large minority in favour of ultimate abolition. On the 20th of the same month, three days before Parliament was prorogued, Mr. Buxton, in his place in the House, made an earnest appeal to the electors throughout the kingdom, repeating the statement made by Canning in 1823, that "the first step towards emancipation should be the abolition of the practice of flogging females." He showed that even this first step had not yet been taken; a decision having recently been made by a large majority in the Jamaica House of Assembly, that females should continue to be flogged indecently*; and he proved in detail that each of the other abuses, which in 1823 it had been proposed to mitigate, still existed in the colonies, unchecked and unaltered.

As to the existence and extent of these abuses, a few words may not be out of place, for many still believe, that although slavery was a barbarous institution, which it was well to abolish, yet that the negroes were, in the main, both kindly treated and happy. This impression has been deepened by the accounts given by some casual visitors of the West Indies, who, seeing little but the surface of things, gave no heed to the horrors that

* Mirror of Parliament, July 20. 1830.

lurked below.* For instance, it was repeatedly asserted that the whip was a mere "emblem of authority," and that the cases of its cruel employment were either fictitious, or at least extremely rare.

With regard to the use of the whip, some official statistics remain, which show it to have been no imaginary evil. But before producing them, it may be well to observe, that the lash was, after all, but one of many hardships which the slave endured. His scanty supply of food and clothing was a source of constant and bitter suffering; all his domestic ties were utterly dissolved; every hindrance was thrown in the way of his education; his religious teachers were persecuted; his day of rest encroached on; every prospect of obtaining civil rights was taken away; however grievous the injury inflicted, to obtain redress was extremely difficult, if not impossible†; his hopes of emancipation were opposed by the greatest obstacles, and the slightest offences subjected him to the severest punishments, to the stocks, to the prison, to the whip.

But of all his grievances, none was greater than the intense severity of his toil. In Jamaica, for example, the amount of field labour allotted by law was nineteen hours a day during crop time, and fourteen and a half during the remainder of the year (with intervals of rest amounting to two hours and a half per diem). This work had to be done, it must be remembered, under an

* There were abundance of eye-witnesses on the other side also. It was remarkable that some of the most energetic of the anti-slavery leaders (for example, Mr. Stephen and Mr. Macaulay) had both studied slavery, and had learned to abhor it, from dwelling under its shadow for years.

† In the four crown colonies Protectors of the slaves had been appointed. But the negroes were often flogged by these very Protectors, if they could not substantiate a charge made against a white man. Against this iniquity Sir George Murray set his face with his usual decision and vigour. (See "Protectors' Reports.")

almost vertical sun; and the mode of its performance is thus described: — "The slaves were divided into gangs of from thirty to fifty men, generally selected of a nearly equal degree of strength, but many were often weak or diseased. They were placed in a line in the field, with drivers (armed with the whip) at equal distances; and were obliged to maintain that line throughout the day, so that those who were not so strong as the others, were literally flogged up by the drivers. The motion of the line was rapid and constant."

These evils were general and were not denied. For the most part, indeed, they were authorised by the colonial laws, but the flogging, of which the Anti-slavery party complained, was made light of by their antagonists, as if it were a mere chimera. "How," asked the West Indian leaders, "will the country believe that the proprietors of colonial property — men of honour, humanity, and prudence — would suffer their negroes to be torn to pieces by the lash?"*

It was, indeed, suggested in reply, that these proprietors were non-resident,—that they employed agents, and the agents employed drivers, whose interest it was to wring the most work each year from the muscles of the slave, and to spend as little as possible upon him,—though to the ultimate ruin of the estate.†

* In 1823, Mr. C. Ellis, afterwards Lord Seaford (himself a West Indian planter), stated his conviction that "the whip was generally placed in the hands of the drivers more as a badge of authority than as an instrument of coercion," and was considered "only as a symbol of office;" and this opinion was held in all sincerity by many others of the West Indian proprietors.—(See Hansard, May 1823.)

† The following is an extract from "Truths from the West Indies," by Captain S. Hodgson, of the 19th Infantry:—"There are few *bonâ fide* proprietors resident on the spot; the greater part of the estates are mortgaged to nearly their full value, and are superintended by some of the mortgagees or their agents. These people have no idea beyond grinding out of the property the largest possible sum in the shortest possible period, per-

But we have to deal, not with speculations, but with plain facts.

The colonies of Demerara, Berbice, Trinidad, and St. Lucia were, as it is termed, "Crown Colonies," and, as such, were under the direct control of the Colonial Office at home; whereas in the other islands the planters were governed by Assemblies of their own. In those four colonies alone had the ameliorations been enforced which the other islands had spurned to receive. Here alone had the Government placed protectors of the slaves, at whose hands, when wronged, they could seek redress; and, among other measures of precaution, returns were required of the punishments inflicted by the magistrates.* It was, then, in the four Crown Colonies that slavery existed in its mildest form; and yet, upon the oath of the planters themselves, there were registered in these four colonies, in the two years 1828–9, 68,921 punishments, of which 25,094 were registered as inflicted upon females.†

Now as the law allowed twenty-five stripes to one punishment, which limit was frequently passed‡, we cannot (taking it at twenty stripes to a punishment) estimate the total amount of stripes inflicted during 1828–9 in those four colonies at less than *one million three hundred and fifty thousand.*

fectly indifferent to the eventual ruin they must entail by the over-working of the soil; and having no sympathy for the slaves, whom they literally regard as cattle, they think alone of the present gain to themselves. Where the proprietor resides, I have generally observed him kind, and his people happy and contented."

* It is obvious that a large number of punishments would remain unregistered, through the unwillingness of their inflictors to record them: thus, in the Report of the Protector of Slaves in Demerara, we find, in 1829, "Mary Lowe *convicted* of tying up first a little girl, and then a little boy, by the wrists, the one for five, the other for nine hours, and flogging them 'unmercifully;' and of other cruelties." Yet her estate gave in no returns of punishment.—(See Parliamentary Returns.)

† See Protectors' Reports. Parliamentary Papers. ‡ Ib.

CHAPTER XVII.

SLAVERY. 1831.

RELIGIOUS MEDITATIONS. — THE DUKE'S DECLARATION. — CHANGE OF MINISTRY.—THE WHIG GOVERNMENT DOES NOT TAKE UP THE SUBJECT OF SLAVERY.—QUAKERS' PETITION.—DECREASE OF THE SLAVE POPULATION.—DEBATE. — THE GOVERNMENT STILL TRIES TO LEAD THE COLONISTS TO ADOPT MITIGATING MEASURES. — PARLIAMENT DISSOLVED. — LETTER FROM BELLFIELD. — LETTER TO A SON AT COLLEGE.—DINNER AT THE BREWERY.—ANECDOTES.—REFLECTIONS. — DEATH OF MR. NORTH. — CORRESPONDENCE.

THE day before the commencement of the session of 1831, Mr. Buxton thus implores help and guidance from on high: —

"January 30. 1831.

"Give me, O Lord, thy help, thy present, and evident, and all-sufficient help, in pleading the cause of the slave. Let the light of thy countenance shine upon me. Give me wisdom to select the proper course, and courage to pursue it, and ability to perform my part; and turn the hearts of the powerful, so that they may be prone to feel for, and prompt to help, those whose bodies and whose souls are in slavery. 'If ye ask anything in my name,' said our Saviour, 'I will do it.' In His prevailing name, and for His merits, do this, O Lord God! * * * But whatever may be thy will in my secular concerns, give me patience, faith, thankfulness, confidence; a sense of thy Divine Majesty, of the benignity of Christ, a love for thy Scriptures, a love of prayer, and a heart firmly fixed on immortality. May I remember that, ere the year closes, I may be snatched away and hurried before thy judgment-seat! Be with me, then, in health and in sickness, in life and in death, in events prosperous and adverse, in my intercourse with my family, in my public duties, in my study. Be thou my strong habitation to which I may continually resort. Be with me and mine every day and every hour during this year."

The recent political changes might have seemed to

augur well for the cause of emancipation. The Duke of Wellington's celebrated declaration against Reform had broken up his ministry. That of Earl Grey had succeeded, in which the post of Lord Chancellor was filled by Lord Brougham.

Yet Dr. Lushington writes,—

"January, 1831.

"For the sake of all the great interests of humanity, I trust that you may now resume your public duties. I am of opinion that this is a fearful crisis for many of the great objects you have at heart. Without great exertion both slavery and capital punishment will be almost unaltered. I have but little confidence in the merely voluntary good-will of the new Government, and feel strongly the necessity that they should be taught that the voice of the people will not admit of dilatory or half measures."

Again, soon afterwards —

"The prospect is not encouraging, so far as relates to the Government, but with you, who have cast your lot in these troubled waters, and will never fall back, this can only be a reason for greater and more strenuous exertion. For myself, I must add, that though I am grievously disappointed with them, yet, on the other hand, the feeling of the people so much surpasses my former expectations, that I am confident you may now rely with safety on their firm and continued support. The impression is not that of a momentary excitement; knowledge of the subject has increased, and is increasing; and if the Government disregard the opinions of the people on slavery, I believe, as well as hope, they will have reason to repent. I see the difficulties of your career. I meditate much upon them; but with such a cause, your powers, and leisure, there never was a nobler course for man to run. *Succeed the cause must;* it is a question of time only. * * * Still, however, time is of inestimable value, and he who can accelerate the event one year, a single year, will have well spent his life."

With the Reform question on their hands, there seemed but little chance that the Whig Government, however friendly to emancipation, would undertake its

accomplishment. But Mr. Buxton would leave no chance untried. On the 25th of March, in stating his intention to move a resolution for the complete abolition of slavery, he declared that he would "most readily leave the matter in the hands of Government, if Government would take it up;"* but to this offer no reply was made.

It is to this subject that the following letter alludes, addressed to a member of the Administration: —

"April 6. 1831.

* * * "I feel bound to tell you that upon the most attentive consideration I shall feel compelled to withhold my concurrence from any resolutions which do not declare 'the extinction of slavery' to be their object. I am aware that I do not go farther in detestation of slavery than his Majesty's Government; but perhaps a long and laborious investigation may have led me to entertain a deeper sense of the practical evils of the system. In my mind, these amount to nothing short of a crime; and, if it be a crime, the way to deal with it is, not to strip it of some of its worst features, but to abandon it altogether.

"I confess I distrust all ameliorations of slavery. If the Government resolve to undertake them, theirs will be the responsibility; and if they succeed, theirs exclusively the merit.

"I believe their intentions to be perfectly honest, and that they will act resolutely in carrying those intentions into execution. For these and for other reasons, it gives me the greatest pain to be unable to yield my opinions to theirs. I am sure if I act thus, it is not from obstinacy, or from unwillingness to meet their wishes; but it is from fidelity to the cause itself, and to the friends of the cause, to whom I am pledged to bring forward a motion, not for the mitigation, but for the extinction, of slavery. I beg you to believe that it is with reluctance I thus bring myself forward, and that it is only as acting in some sort on behalf of a large body in the nation, that I presume to trouble you beforehand with the line of conduct I shall adopt."

* Hansard for that date.

A few days later, in presenting, among 500 petitions against slavery, one subscribed by the Society of Friends, he said:—

"I have great pleasure in presenting this petition from that body; as they were the very first persons in the country who promulgated the doctrine that the buying, selling, or holding of slaves was contrary to the Christian religion. Forty years ago they presented the first petition for the abolition of the slave-trade, and eight years ago they presented the first petition for the abolition of slavery."*

It was a part of Mr. Buxton's policy to avail himself as little as possible of the evidence furnished by men favourable to emancipation; he always strove to draw his statements from the speeches and writings of his opponents, or immediately from official reports. In this branch of his labours (and it was no small one) he derived much assistance from the great knowledge and practised sagacity of Mr. Macaulay, and also from the secretary of the Anti-slavery Society, Mr. Thomas Pringle, whose poetical writings are well known. Mr. Pringle's originality, conjoined with other qualities, as useful if less brilliant; his admirable English style; his diligence, tact, and temper, rendered good service to the cause. Being ready to catch a hint from any quarter, they frequently tracked documents of great value into the Colonial Office, and then by reiterated motions Mr. Buxton usually succeeded in bringing them to light.

In this way vast funds of information had been collected; and between the sessions of 1830–31, Mr. Buxton ransacked all his stores for evidence relative to the

* George Fox (the founder of Quakerism), when in Barbadoes, urged the overseers "to deal mildly and gently with the negroes, and not to use cruelty towards them, as the manner of some has been and is."—(See "A Popular Life of George Fox." C. Gilpin, 1847.)

decrease of the slave population. Having completed his calculations, he laid them before the House on the 15th of April.

In the commencement of his speech he assured the House that he had not the slightest feeling of hostility towards the West Indian proprietors, nor the slightest disposition to cast reproach upon them; and he disclaimed any wish to rest his argument on cases of individual atrocity, though abundance of them might be brought forward.

He proceeds: —

"But, amid the conflicting statements as to the condition of the slaves, it would be extremely desirable to find any fair and unequivocal test of their condition. There is such a test — in the rate at which the slave population has increased or decreased. It is a doctrine admitted by all parties, that, under all circumstances, except those of extreme misery, population must increase. Such is the law of nature, and it is conformable to the experience of all mankind. That law of increase may be interrupted, but it can be interrupted only by causes of extreme misery.

"The question, then, is, whether in the fourteen sugar-growing colonies the slave population has increased, has been stationary, or has decreased? The answer is, it has not increased, it has not been stationary, it has decreased. Not only has it decreased, but it has decreased at a rate so rapid that I confess it surprises me, and I am sure will astonish the House. In the last ten years the slave population in those fourteen colonies has decreased by the number of 45,800 persons."*

* In 1835 numerous papers relating to the statistics of the colonial dependencies of Great Britain were ordered by the House of Commons to be printed. Amongst them appeared some tables, which showed the yearly decrease of the slave population in eleven West India islands, during a period of twelve years previous to emancipation. They differ in some degree from those on which Mr. Buxton founded his argument, but they give a *still greater decrease*. By these tables it appears that in those *eleven* islands the decrease in the number of slaves (exclusively of manumissions) had been 60,119. — (See Parl. Papers in the Appendix.)

In Tobago, within ten years, one sixth of the slave population had perished. In Demerara it had diminished by 12,000, in Trinidad by 6000, within twelve years. "The fact is," he said, "that in Trinidad, as the late Mr. Marryat observed, 'the slaves die off like rotten sheep.'" These diminutions were exclusive of manumissions.

He then showed that, while in slavery the numbers of the negroes decreased thus rapidly, in freedom they were doubling. For example, the *free* black population of Demerara had (exclusive of manumissions) been increased by half in fourteen years. And the free negroes of Hayti had increased by 520,000 in twenty years, that is, their numbers had more than doubled.

"Now, Sir," he continued, "if the blacks in slavery had increased as the free blacks have increased, the slave population should have added in the last ten years 200,000 to its numbers; whereas that number has been diminished by 45,000. To keep *pari passu* with the free blacks, the blacks in slavery should have increased 20,000 a year; whereas they have decreased 4000 a year. They should have increased fifty a day, whereas they have decreased ten a day. For this effect, this striking exception to the universal law of nature, there must be a specific cause. It could not occur by accident. What *is* the cause? I will tell the House what it is *not*. It is not, as it has been affirmed to be, any disproportion between the sexes; any deficiency in the number of females. In 1814, the number of female slaves exceeded that of males by 5000. The cause, therefore, of this decrease in the slave population, is not any disproportion between the sexes; it is not war sweeping away its thousands; it is not climate; it is not soil. If any one thinks that the last two circumstances may operate injuriously upon the slave population, I ask him why, under the same circumstances, the free black population has so much increased? Sir, the real cause is *the forced labour in the sugar colonies*, and nothing else. The law of nature would be too strong for any other cause. It is too strong for climate, witness Bencoolen.

It is too strong for war, witness Africa. It is too strong for savage life, witness the Maroons of Jamaica. It is too strong for vice and misery, witness Hayti. All such impediments yield to the law of nature; but the law of nature yields to the cultivation of sugar in the sugar colonies. Where the blacks are free, they increase. Climate, soil, war, vice, misery, are too feeble to withstand the current of nature. But let there be a change in only one circumstance; let the population be the same in every respect, only let them be slaves instead of freemen, and the currency is immediately stopped.

"I hope the resolutions I intend to submit will appear temperate, although in them I declare myself no friend to ameliorating measures, in which I have no faith. I do not think that by such measures the mortality can be repressed. Besides, Sir, I must tell you, that I look upon the enslaving of our fellowmen as a crime of the deepest dye; and I therefore consider that it should be dealt with, not by palliatives, but by destroying it altogether."

He concluded by moving the following resolutions:—

"That in the resolutions of May, 1823, the House distinctly recognised it to be their solemn duty to take measures for the abolition of slavery in the British colonies; that in the eight years which have since elapsed, the colonial assemblies have not taken measures to carry the resolutions of the House into effect; that, deeply impressed with a sense of the impropriety, inhumanity, and injustice of colonial slavery, this House will proceed to consider of and adopt the best means of effecting its abolition throughout the British dominions."

The motion was seconded in an able speech by Lord Morpeth.

Lord Althorp stated that, although he could not consent to this motion, he thought it was time "to adopt other measures with the colonists than those of mere recommendations," and that he should propose that a distinction in the rate of duties should be made in favour of those colonies which should comply with the wishes of Government as to amelioration. After an animated discussion, the debate was adjourned. Mr.

O'Connell, who throughout gave a steady and energetic support to the anti-slavery cause, came across the House, and said, "*Buxton, I see land.*" The prognostic was true; for although, owing to the dissolution of Parliament, the debate was not resumed, and the motion therefore dropped, yet to the argument founded upon the decrease of population may be attributed more than to any thing else the speedy downfall of slavery. The force of that argument was well understood in Parliament; accordingly it was vigorously sifted by the opposite party; but, having been drawn from the returns of registration sworn to by the planters themselves, it was found impossible to shake it. The appalling fact was never denied, that at the time of the abolition of the slave trade, in 1807, the number of slaves in the West Indies was 800,000: in 1830 it was 700,000. That is to say, in twenty-three years it had diminished by 100,000.*

It may here be well to mention, though it be in anticipation of our history, how fully Mr. Buxton's inferences were confirmed by subsequent events. In 1834 emancipation took place, the law of nature resumed its force, the population began to increase, and the census in 1844 proves that in the twelve previous years the black population in fourteen of the islands had *increased* by 54,000.†

The abolitionists are often blamed for the present want of labour in the West Indies. It should be remembered, however, that, had slavery not been abolished, the population (taking the decrease at its average rate

* See Anti-slavery Reporter, vol. v. p. 264.

† Not more than fourteen of the islands sent in their returns of population. Had they been received from the whole twenty-one the increase would of course have been far greater, especially as Jamaica is not included. —(See Parl. Papers in the Appendix.)

before emancipation) would by this time have *diminished* by much more than 100,000 instead of having *increased* in the same proportion.

At the end of April, Parliament was dissolved, and the country was hurried into a whirlpool of reform agitation, in which all other interests were merged; so that Mr. Buxton might think himself fortunate in having forced upon the ear of Parliament the short but impressive argument which has been laid before the reader. The approaching election rendered it necessary for Mr. Buxton to visit Weymouth. He thus writes home from Bellfield on the 28th of April, 1831:—

"I was up at seven o'clock this morning, and have been taking another charming walk in the shrubbery, looking at the sea, which is splendid, and enjoying the Epistle to the Colossians. At nine o'clock we breakfast, and at ten I renew my canvass, which was very successful yesterday.

"I found all my constituents eager for Reform beyond conception; had I voted against it, I should hardly have got any support. Is not this unexpected?

"The weather is delightful, and I thoroughly enjoy a taste of spring in the country. The walks about are lined with quantities of flowers; it *is* a charming place! Give my love to my secretary*, and tell her that I find an attorney's clerk a poor substitute.

"I hope you will enjoy Simeon's visit. I deeply lament missing it; I was in great hopes we should have got a great deal of good out of the old Apostle. Pray get all you can, and keep a piece for me."

To his eldest Son, at Trinity College, Cambridge.

"Devonshire St., May 15. 1831.

"My mind has much turned towards you of late, and I have thought more than you might suppose of your approaching examination. Not that I am very solicitous about the result, except so far as your heart may be set on success. I should be

* His eldest daughter.

very sorry to have you damped and disappointed, but for myself, I shall be just as well satisfied with you if you are low in the last class, as if you are high in the first.

"But I have a piece of advice to give you, with regard to the examination, which I am sure will, if attended to, be of service; and if you remember it, and act upon it, it will be useful whenever, during your future life, you are about to engage in any thing of more than usual importance. Go to God in prayer; lay before him, as before your wisest and best friend, your care, your burthen, and your wishes; consult him, ask his advice, entreat his aid, and commit yourself to him; but ask especially, that there may be this restraint upon the efficacy of your prayers,—that His will, and not your wishes, may govern the result; that what you desire may be accomplished, provided He sees it to be best, and not otherwise.

"The experience of my life is, that events always go right when they are undertaken in the spirit of prayer. I have found assistance given and obstructions removed, in a way which has convinced me that some secret power has been at work. But the assurance of this truth rests on something stronger than my own experience. Scripture is full of declarations of the prevalence and efficacy of prayer, and of the safety of those who resort to it. 'Commit thy way unto the Lord, and he shall bring it to pass.' 'This poor man cried, and the Lord heard him, and saved him out of all his troubles.' 'Wait on the Lord, be of good courage and he will strengthen thy heart; wait, I say, on the Lord.'

"It is not often I give you my advice; attend to it in this instance. Depend upon it, prayer is the best preparation you can have for your examination, and for every thing else."

In June, 1831, several members of the Government, and other gentlemen, came to look over the Brewery in Spitalfields, and afterwards dined there with Mr. Buxton, professedly on beef-steaks, cooked in one of the furnaces. Mr. J. J. Gurney gives the following account of the party:—

"Earlham, 12 mo. 23rd, 1831.

* * * "The Premier, grave and thoughtful as he seemed, did great justice to our dinner. 'Milord Grey,' cried the

Spanish General Alava to him, as he was availing himself of a fresh supply of beef-steaks (pronounced by the Lord Chancellor to be 'perfect')—'Milord Grey, vous êtes à votre *sixième*.'

"The contrast between Lord Grey and Alava was curious; the former, the dignified, stiff, sedate British nobleman of the old school; the latter, the entertaining, entertained, and voluble foreigner. He had been the faithful companion of the Duke of Wellington through most of his campaigns, and now had displayed his usual energy by coming up all the way from Walmer Castle, near Dover, in order to help in devouring the product of the stoke-hole in Spitalfields.

"The Lord Chancellor was in high glee: he came in a shabby black coat, and very old hat; strangely different from the starred, gartered, and cocked-hat dignity of the venerable Premier. * * * It was my agreeable lot to sit between Lord Grey and Dr. Lushington, and the latter being occupied by his friend on the other side, I was left to converse with the Premier, which I had the pleasure of doing for nearly two hours. * * * We talked of his long political course, and Lord Shaftesbury, who sat next to him on the other side, complimented him on the subject.

"Lord Grey. 'I came into Parliament for Northumberland when I was two-and-twenty, and I have been forty-five years a senator.' Of course it was easy to draw the inference that he was sixty-seven years of age. On my expressing the interest I felt for him, and even sympathy, under the burthen he was bearing, he replied, 'I am much too old for it. I would have refused the undertaking, if I could have done so consistently with my duty.'

"Our next subject was parliamentary eloquence. I asked him who, amidst the vast variety of orators whom he had been accustomed to hear, appeared to him to be the best speaker and most able debater.

"Lord Grey. 'Beyond all doubt and comparison, Fox. His eloquence was irresistible. It came from his heart, and produced a corresponding effect on the hearts of his hearers.'

"I asked his opinion of Sheridan. The answer was, 'He was very able, but could not speak without preparation.'

"I ventured to insinuate that there was no part of a Premier's office more responsible than that of making bishops. He assented,

adding, 'You know I have had none to make at present.' We talked of the Bishop of Norwich.* Lord Grey expressed his admiration of his conduct and character, though he only knew him in his public capacity. 'I fear the bishop is too old to accept any offer that I can make him, but I assure you that the very first and best thing that I have to give away shall be at his service.'

"This declaration has since been fully verified, by his offering to the bishop the see of Dublin, which the latter, as had been anticipated, refused; observing, in the words of old Erasmus to the Emperor of Austria, that dignity conferred upon him would be like a burden laid on a falling horse: 'Sarcina equo collabenti imposita.'

"When the dinner was ended, I quitted my post by Lord Grey, and joined Buxton, Lord Brougham, and the Duke of Richmond, at the top of the table. Buxton was telling a story on the subject of Reform (the only way in which that subject could be mentioned, as the dinner was not political, and Tories were present). 'A stage-coachman,' said he, 'was driving a pair of sorry horses, the other day, from London to Greenwich. One of them stumbled, and nearly fell. "Get up, you *borough-mongering* rascal you!" said the coachman to the poor beast, as he laid the whip across his back.' The Chancellor laughed heartily at this story. 'How like my Lord —— there was the old horse!' said he to me, laughing, and putting his hands before his face,—Lord —— sitting opposite to us.

"Buxton now left us, to talk with Lord Grey, whom he very much delighted by praising Lord Howick's speech upon slavery. It was a speech which deserved praise for its honesty and feeling, as well as for its talent. But the old Premier seemed to think that his son had been carried by his zeal rather too far.

"Something led us (Lord Brougham and myself) to talk about Paley, and I mentioned the story of his having on his death-bed condemned his 'Moral Philosophy,' and declared his preference for the 'Horæ Paulinæ' above all his other works. This led Brougham to speak of both those works. 'Did you ever hear that King George III. was requested by Mr. Pitt to make Paley a bishop? The king refused; and, taking down the "Moral Philosophy" from the shelf, he showed Pitt the

* Dr. Bathurst.

passage in which he justifies subscription to articles not fully credited, on the ground of expediency. "This," said the King, "is my reason for not making him a bishop."' Lord Grey overheard the Chancellor's story and confirmed it; 'but,' added the Chancellor, 'I believe the true reason why George III. refused to make Paley a bishop was, that he had compared the divine right of kings to the divine right of constables!' * * * The Chancellor was very cordial, and we were all delighted with his entertaining rapidity of thought, ready wit, and evident good feeling. Nor was it possible to be otherwise than pleased with all our guests, with whom we parted, about eleven o'clock at night, after a flowing, exhilarating, and not altogether uninstructive day."

Mr. Buxton subjoins,—

"Our party at the Brewery went off in all respects to my satisfaction. Talleyrand could not come, having just received an account of Prince Leopold being elected king of Belgium. Brougham said this was a severe disappointment, as his Excellency never eats or drinks but once a-day, and had depended on my beef-steaks.

"The party arrived at about six o'clock, and consisted of the Lord Chancellor, Lord Grey, Duke of Richmond, Marquis of Cleveland, Lords Shaftesbury, Sefton, Howick, Durham, and Duncannon, General Alava, S. Gurney, Dr. Lushington, Spring Rice, W. Brougham, J. J. Gurney, R. Hanbury, &c., twenty-three in all.

"I first led them to the steam engine; Brougham ascended the steps, and commenced a lecture upon steam-power, and told many entertaining anecdotes; and when we left the engine he went on lecturing as to the other parts of the machinery, so that Joseph Gurney said he understood brewing better than any person on the premises. I had Mr. Gow up with his accounts, to explain how much our horses each cost per annum; and Brougham entered into long calculations upon this subject. To describe the variety of his conversation is impossible—

'From grave to gay, from lively to severe.'

"At dinner I gave but two toasts, 'The King,' and 'The memory of George III.,' whose birthday it was. We had no

speeches; but conversation flowed, or rather roared like a torrent, at our end of the table. The Chancellor lost not a moment; he was always eating, drinking, talking, or laughing; his powers of laughing seemed on a level with his other capacities. * * *

"Talking of grace before dinner he said, 'I like the Dutch grace best; they sit perfectly still and quiet for a minute or two.' I thought it very solemn. Again, 'I am a great admirer of the Church; but the clergy have one fault — they grow immortal in this world. You cannot think how they trouble me by living so long. I have three upwards of ninety years old; bedridden, bereft of understanding, incapable of enjoyment and of doing duty; but they will live, and are keeping men I long to provide for out of their benefices. There's Wilberforce's son, and Macaulay's, and Austin; I am waiting for an opportunity of showing that I do not forget them, but these old gentlemen thwart me: surely there is no sin in wishing that they were gathered to their fathers.' He then went on to speak of Austin. 'He is exactly the man who deserves the patronage of Government; the Bishop of ——, who is as good a man as can be, but as simple-hearted as good, came to me the other day, and told me that there was a clergyman in his diocese of excellent character who had suffered from the West Indians; his name was Austin; probably I had never heard of him, though his name had been mentioned in Parliament. I soon convinced him that I knew more of Austin than he did, and I mean to send him the debate on Smith's case.* I think he might pick up some good principles in it. But as for Austin, I do not forget what you said to me last December, and you shall soon see that I do not. If I have not done something already, blame not me, but these everlasting parsons.'

"We then talked about the Court of Chancery, and I said, 'I hope to see the day in which you shall be sitting in your Court and calling for the next case, and the officer of the Court shall tell you that all the cases are disposed of: that will be the most glorious hour of your life.' 'Well,' said he, 'that you shall see, and see it too before the close of the session. Depend upon it there shall not be an appeal case in the House of Lords in two months' time!'

* See p. 159.

"He inquired the wages of the draymen. I told him about 45*s.* weekly; and we allow them to provide substitutes for a day or two in the week, but we insist on their paying them at the rate of 26*s.* per week. 'Yes,' said he, 'I understand; these rich and beneficed gentry employ curates, and the curates of the draymen get about as much salary as those of the clergy.'

"After dinner we took them to the stables to see the horses. Somebody said, 'Now the Lord Chancellor will be at a loss; at all events he knows nothing about horses.' However, fortune favoured him, for he selected one of the best of them, and pointed out his merits. Some one proposed that he should get upon his back, and ride him round the yard, which he seemed very willing to do; and thus ends my history of the Lord Chancellor.

"Lord Grey looked care-worn, but was remarkably cordial."*

* * * *

The new Parliament, which had met on the 14th of June, was altogether occupied in debates on the Reform Bill; and Mr. Buxton, who was deeply interested in the progress of the measure, was detained in London till September.

The following paper was written six weeks after his return to his usual recreations in the country: —

"Northrepps Hall, Oct. 26. 1831.

"S. Hoare goes away to-day. Shooting has been good medicine for him; he came down with very gloomy views on the state of public affairs; but the dangers from Reform or the rejection of Reform — the perils of the Church and State — have gradually disappeared, and now, as far as he can see, the country, if not prosperous and secure, is at least threatened with no imminent danger!

"I cannot but think that the air, exercise, and absence of care are essential to his health of body, and to the tranquillity of his mind; nay, I doubt whether he could go on in his very

* Mr. Buxton had a very high opinion of Lord Grey. "If you talk with him for half an hour," he remarked on one occasion, "you find his intellect a head higher than any body's else; he has more mind than any man in this country."

useful career without that season of repose and relaxation. This is my deliberate judgment with regard to him, and may God bless him, and give him health of body, a cheerful and a wholesome mind—peace here and for ever! It is not often that two persons have a union so strong, so unvarying, so cemented by a similarity of taste and pursuit, of principles and views, agreeing so entirely in serious as well as in lighter concerns as that which for five-and-twenty years has subsisted between us. Well, may God bless him, and may we edify and benefit, as well as amuse, each other.

"As for myself, I feel about shooting that it is not time lost if it contributes to my health and cheerfulness. I have many burthens, and it is well to cast them off, lest they should so dispirit and oppress me that I become less capable of active exertion.

"But now my holiday is nearly ended: shooting may be my recreation, but it is not my business. It has pleased God to place some duties upon me with regard to the poor slaves, and those duties I must not abandon. Oppression and cruelty, and persecution, and, what is worse, absence of religion, must not continue to grind that unfortunate race through my neglect. Grant, O God, that I may be enabled by thy Holy Spirit to discharge my solemn duties to them. Thou hast promised thy Spirit, thy aid, and thy wisdom to those who ask them, and under a sense of my utter incompetency to do anything of my own strength, I humbly and earnestly crave and entreat thy guiding wisdom, and that power and strength which cometh from thee. Make me an instrument in thy hands for the relief and for the elevation of that afflicted people. For the oppression of the poor, for the sighing of the needy, now arise, O Lord, and grant me the privilege of labouring and combating in their behalf. I am inclined to think that it will not be wrong to give two mornings in the week, while the fine weather lasts, to exercise, and the evenings of those days to letters and my various businesses—I shall then have four days for slavery. * * * Once more I pray that it may please thee, O God, for Christ's sake, to lift up the light of thy countenance on me, my labours, my meditations, and my prayers; grant me to grow in grace, and call forth the powers thou hast given me for thy own ser-

vice; strengthen me with might in the inner man; deal bountifully with thy servant. Amen."

A few days later he writes again: —

"November 6. 1831.

"Accept, O Lord, my thanks for that indulgent mercy which has followed me all my days. I thank thee that I am in vigour of body and mind; that I am not under the influence at this moment of any sore calamity; that I am not racked with pain, nor tormented with grievous apprehension; but that it is a time of some peace and serenity.

"I bless thee that, in all the outward circumstances of life, thou hast dealt bountifully with me; that thou hast given me, not indeed great talents and endowments, but a sound mind and enough force of understanding for the performance of my duties; that thou hast placed me in a reputable station, given me a good business, fair health, competence; in short, that in these things I am more prosperous than many that deserve them better; that if not placed on the hill, I am not cast down into the valley. In my family I have been happy. Severe afflictions have come; some of those most dear to me have been snatched away in the dawn of their days, and one is lately gone whom I unceasingly deplore; but he is gone to his God; he is in peace; he is an inhabitant of those mansions prepared by thine Almighty power for those who love thee. Then hast thou not rescued me from a thousand perils, from temptations, from sins? Can I not respond to the thanksgivings of the Psalmist (Psalm ciii. 1—5)? Am I not within reach of great spiritual advantages? I thank thee, O Lord, that thou hast led me to read my Bible, and hast supplied me with thy Spirit while I read, so that my heart and mind have been fixed on the power of prayer, on the influence of the Spirit, on the mercies of my God, on the deliverance of mankind through a blessed Saviour. Yes! thou hast offered to me that 'living bread which cometh down from heaven,' and giveth eternal life to those who feed on it. Thy mercies, in truth, have been to me abundant and innumerable, as the leaves of the forest, as the sands of the sea. Benignant and bountiful hast thou been to me all the days of my life, and may it please thee evermore to be so, to continue to bless me in body, in mind, in estate, in pursuits, in family, in friends, in

business, in prayer, in meditation, in thankfulness for the visible mercy of God, and in the atonement of Christ.

"We stand now in a peculiar crisis; though I am not troubled with care, or depressed with apprehension, there is reason for alarm. It is, both in private and public matters, a time of trouble, and I have good reason to seek thee with earnestness of supplication in this perilous period. As for public matters, have I not reason to turn steadfastly to Him who can shield us from dangers, however imminent and however terrible? Last week the Bristol riots prevailed, and the same spirit may spread through the country. In this neighbourhood the incendiary has been briskly at work. Last night the news arrived that the cholera had really commenced its ravages in England; and to-morrow a meeting of the working classes is to take place in London. Storms seem gathering in every direction, and the tempest may soon break upon my own house. Assist me then, O Lord, to prepare for events which may so soon approach. Let my house be planted on a rock which shall stand firm in the buffetings of the winds and the waves. O my God, I feel that there is no security, save the perfect security which belongs to thee. Vain is the help of man; folly is his wisdom; feebleness his strength; but in entire unshaken confidence I desire to commit and to commend to thee myself, my family, my friends, my neighbours, my country.

"Give us wisdom to act aright; preside over our councils; lead us to the right path, and to do the right thing. Let thy Spirit be poured forth upon us in rich profusion, prepare us for outward danger by inward grace. Teach us that no real calamity can befall us if we are in the hands of our God, that we are safe under the shadow of His wings. Give us the spirit of true prayer, and let it abide with us; and if death be coming, 'in the hour of death and in the day of judgment, good Lord deliver us,' for the sake of our blessed Redeemer, Christ Jesus."

The insurrectionary spirit of the day, alluded to in this paper, reached even the quiet neighbourhood of Cromer; and one morning, when Mr. Buxton was at breakfast, news came that a band of rioters were passing along a road near his house, on their way to destroy a farmer's

thrashing machine. He at once walked out to meet them, accompanied by his younger children, and on coming up to them made a short speech, explaining to them what fools they were, and urging them not to run the risk of the gallows. When he had done, observing that they were headed by a man with a long pole in his hand, surmounted by a reaping-hook, Mr. Buxton stepped up to him, and after a moment's struggle wrested it away, none of the others interfering. He then disarmed another in the same way, and this so completely disconcerted these valiant rioters, that they began to disperse, and were soon all safe at home in their cottages.

At the beginning of this autumn Mr. Buxton had sustained the loss of his early and highly valued friend John Henry North, who had sunk under the fatigue incurred by his exertions in Parliament against the Reform Bill. Their friendship had not been cooled by the difference in their political careers.

To Mrs. North.

"My dear Friend, "Northrepps, November 20. 1831.

"I have not written to you of late partly from a reluctance to intrude on your griefs, and partly from another feeling. What can I say to comfort you? There are topics of consolation for ordinary calamities; but, in your case, the blow has been too deep and too terrible to admit of any comfort save one, and with that I trust you are abundantly blessed. I have made, however, some inquiries about you, and was distressed to hear of your extreme depression; not that I wonder at it; your loss has been great indeed; but I wish to say to you — Cheer up, my friend! the day is coming in which you will, I confidently believe, be restored to the object of your affection. The blow which has levelled your joys and your hopes with the dust came from the hand of a most loving Father, and hereafter you will know that it was sent in mercy and loving-kindness. I heartily wish that I had sometimes the privilege of seeing you. I,

too, have had very deep afflictions in my family; many of the pleasant pictures which my imagination had painted have been destroyed. This, I believe, makes my heart more susceptible of the distress of others, and I should be glad of the opportunity of pointing out to you those passages in Scripture, and elsewhere, in which I have found relief and comfort. But if I do not see you, I do not forget you. I remember your forlorn and solitary state, and the bitter contrast between your home now and in former times. I can conceive the dreariness of it, and how constantly you must miss such a friend and companion as you have lost; but there is consolation in reflecting on what he said and what he felt in his last hours, and in tracing his happy change from this sorrowful world, to the inexpressible joys and glories of which he is now, I firmly trust, a partaker.

"This is a very painful period of the year to me. This time, almost this day, last year, I lost a son — and such a son! But God's will be done! I find that nothing so takes off the sting of my grief as a realising sense of his perfect happiness. My dear boy's name was *John Henry*, so named after the dearest friend of my youth.

"Believe me, my dear friend, very truly and in sincere sympathy,

"Yours,

"T. FOWELL BUXTON."

He thus writes to a gentleman with whom he had been engaged in important business, and who was now labouring under indisposition: —

"Devonshire Street, March, 1832.

"It seems very long since I have written to you, or heard from you, but I am rejoiced to hear better tidings of your health. The worst part of the spring is now over. I have more confidence in air and gentle exercise than in all the doctors; and I confidently hope that these will recruit your spirits and your health, so as fully to re-establish you.

"You will remember that I spoke to you some months ago upon the subject of religion. I, at least, well recollect that you received what I said with your usual kindness. I had some doubts as to the kind of books which you would be inclined to read. I have sent you a few, and shall be really glad to hear that you have read them and liked them.

"After all, the main purpose of our living here is to prepare for eternity. It matters little how we fare in this world, provided a better awaits us. Death will soon overtake both the sick and the healthy: you and I, and all now alive, must soon quit this world; and it is an awful thing to know that either perfect happiness or eternal misery awaits us.

"It is difficult to dwell sufficiently on these things in the busy occupation of life, and I believe that sickness is often sent in mercy for the purpose of turning our minds to reflection and repentance; and that thus, to many, illness has been the greatest blessing of their lives. I both hope and believe this is the case with you. I can bear testimony, and have often done so, to your many excellent and generous qualities, but these alone will not suffice: something more is necessary, and that something is repentance for past sins — a desire and determination to obey God, and, above all, faith in Jesus Christ.

"My hope and wish for you is, that you may be led to pray fervently and constantly for the Spirit of God to teach you. If you ask for that Spirit it will be given to you: it will teach you to read the Bible, it will enlighten your mind on the truths which it contains, and, especially, it will make you to know and feel two things, — first, that God is ready to pardon even the greatest of sinners; and, secondly, that this pardon is derived, not from our own merits, but from the merits of our Saviour.

"I have been led, my dear friend, to say thus much from the sincere interest and friendship I have always felt for you. I entreat you to take it as kindly as it is meant, and to make good use of the leisure which you now have, in attending to the most important concern you were ever engaged in."

The following is an extract from one of his papers, dated Jan. 1. 1832: —

"Grant, O Lord, that I may begin the next year under the guidance and influence of that blessed Spirit, which, if I grieve it not, if I follow it implicitly, if I listen to its still small voice, if I love it as my friend and consult it as my counsellor, will surely lead me, in this life, in the pleasant paths of peace and holiness, and as surely conduct me hereafter to the habitations of unutterable joy.

"Again and again I crave and entreat the presence and the power of that heavenly guide. O Lord, how much have I had in the past year to thank thee for! What mercy, what love, what compassion for my weakness, what readiness to pardon and obliterate the memory of my misdeeds! * * *

"Now, am I sufficiently assiduous in the discharge of my duties? My great duty is the deliverance of my brethren in the West Indies from slavery both of body and soul. In the early part of the year I did in some measure faithfully discharge this. I gave my whole mind to it. I remember that I prayed for firmness and resolution to persevere, and that in spite of some formidable obstructions I was enabled to go on; but, latterly, where has my heart been? Has the bondage of my brethren engrossed my whole mind? The plain and the painful truth is, that it has not. Pardon, O Lord, this neglect of the honourable service to which thou hast called me.

"Give me wisdom to devise, and ability to execute, and zeal and perseverance and dedication of heart, for the task with which thou hast been pleased to honour me. 2 Chron. xx. 12-17.

"And now, Lord, hear and answer my prayer for myself. My first desire is, that this next year may not be thrown away upon any thing less than those hopes and interests which are greater and better than any that this world can contain. May no subordinate cares or earthly interests interrupt my progress. May I act as one whose aim is heaven; may my loins be girded, and my lights burning, and myself like unto men who wait for their lord. Conscious of my own weakness, of my absolute inability to do any thing by my own strength, any thing tending to my own salvation, I earnestly pray for the light and the impulse of thy Holy Spirit, and that Christ may dwell in my heart by faith.

"Bless, O Lord God, my efforts for the extinction of that cruel slavery; or, rather, take the work into thine own hands.

"Bless, O Lord, I earnestly pray thee, bless my family, relations, and friends. With what deep affection I pass them in review, and feel that never was any one privileged to possess a larger number of most faithful friends! I entreat, O Lord, that thou wouldest bless them with all thy choicest blessings, in their families, in their concerns, in their health, and, above all, in the growth of grace in their souls.

"There are some of them from whom I have received much more in kindness than I have ever requited. There are others who seem to need especial intercession. There are those with whom I have all my life been bound by the fastest ties of unclouded affection. For each and for all of them I pray thee, O Lord, turn their hearts to thyself; deliver them from pain, from sorrow, and from sin, and conduct them in thine own way to that fold of which Jesus Christ is the shepherd, and receive them at length as thine own, for the sake of Christ Jesus."

One of his nephews had joined in a school outbreak. Mr. Buxton thus writes to his father: —

"Northrepps, January 8. 1832.

"Your letter reached me to-night, and I lose no time in answering it. As for the '*insurrectionary movements*,' if you did not take them so seriously, we should rather be inclined to smile at them. Let me ask you one plain question. Do you really think one bit the worse of the boy for having been one of these rebels? I do not. Non-resistance to oppression, or supposed oppression, built upon a deep investigation of the tenor of Scripture, and upon the spirit evinced by the author of Christianity, is a very high attainment: it is not to be expected from a lad of his age. Again, it is of all things the most difficult to stand against the current of popular feeling, especially where the motive for doing so may be misconstrued into timidity and truckling.

"In short, if I were his father, I should affectionately and gently remind him that his fault consisted in a departure from the principles which his parents held. I should instil into his mind that it was more noble to stand alone, maintaining that course which they would approve, than to perform the most gallant insurgent exploits; and I should give him to understand that I expected to hear no more of such proceedings; and, in my own heart, I should be quite at ease on the subject. I certainly should send him back again. I would give the school another trial, and I should whisper in the master's ear, that if another rebellion took place *it must be the fault of the system.*

"The only thing about which I should feel any serious apprehension would be, lest the boy should get indirect praise

for his high spirit. I speak from experience. When I was a boy I obtained what then appeared to me to be the glorious discredit of being high-spirited and haughty, and careless of consequences. There is something in this to please the fancy and excite the pride of a boy; and in this character, which stands upon the borders of good and evil, made me very fierce and tyrannical. I say this the more freely, because I think I discern in his mother's letters a great deal of sorrow and apprehension at top, but underneath a little secret, sly satisfaction at her boy's spirit. I send him my love and a sovereign; and if you like, you may read him what I say as to the more noble and manly part which we expect him hereafter to take."

CHAPTER XVIII.

SLAVERY. 1832.

INSURRECTION IN JAMAICA.— LORDS' COMMITTEE.— LETTERS TO LORD SUFFIELD.— SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING.— POSITION OF PARTIES. — STATE OF THE COLONIES.— POLICY OF THE GOVERNMENT.— DEBATE, MAY 24. — MR. BUXTON INSISTS ON DIVIDING THE HOUSE. — FORMATION OF THE COMMITTEE.—RELIGIOUS PERSECUTIONS IN JAMAICA.—RESULT OF THE COMMITTEE.— LETTERS.

When the session of 1832 commenced, the nation was shaken to its centre by the closing struggle on the Reform question. Some may be disposed to wonder that Mr. Buxton, at such a crisis, did not take an active part in the exciting discussions of the day; but though warmly interested in the subject, and constant in giving his attendance and his vote, the incessant occupation arising out of the abolition question prevented him from coming prominently forward on other occasions. His attachment to the cause which so deeply interested him

> "Had killed the flock of all affections else
> That lived in him,"

and his best exertions were needed to prevent the pressing questions of the day from engulphing all remembrance of the far-distant slave. The attention of all parties was, however, for a time recllaed to the subject; first by the violent irritation expressed in the colonies at the declaration of Lord Althorp in the preceding year, that he would "insist on the enforcement" of ameliorating measures *, and at the consequent order in council

* April 15. 1831. Hansard. At one of the public meetings of the planters in Jamaica, this determination of the government was affirmed to

issued, with a despatch from Lord Goderich, in November; and, secondly, by the news of an alarming insurrection among the negroes in Jamaica, who, from hearing the indignant expressions of their masters against the home government, conceived that, "free paper was come," and had been suppressed by the planters. An attempt was made by the latter to implicate the missionaries and some of the clergy in the rebellion of the slaves, and Messrs. Gardner and Knibb were actually arrested on the charge, and indictments made out against them. The case, however, against the former completely broke down, and the Attorney-General abandoned the charge against the other. In fact, not one tittle of evidence was ever adduced against them.*

A warm debate took place on the 23rd of March, in which Lord Howick defended the conduct of Government, in having promised advantages to those colonies which would adopt unchanged the order in council; and asserted that, as the remonstrances of three successive Secretaries of State had proved ineffectual, "the time had arrived when the language of exhortation should cease." †

On the 25th of March Mr. Buxton mentions that twenty of his leading anti-slavery friends dined with him to discuss the subject of slavery, and devise the means of its extinction.

be "unjust and inhuman," while the allegations of the anti-slavery party were stigmatised as "the false and infamous representations of interested and infuriated lunatics."—(See the Life of Wm. Knibb, p. 111.)

* Sir Willoughby Cotton says, in a despatch to Lord Belmore, dated Jan. 3. "The whole of the men shot yesterday stated that they had been told by white people for a long time past that they were to be free at Christmas, and that the freedom order had actually come out from England, but had been withheld."—(See Parl. Paper for 16th March, 1832, No. 285, quoted in A. S. Reporter.)

† Hansard.

"But," says he, "this select band of our special friends and faithful supporters differed upon every practical point; and opinions wavered all the way, from the instant abolition of slavery without any compensation, to its gradual extinction through the agency, and with the cordial concurrence, of the planters.

"Let me then turn," he adds, "from the weakness of man to the strength and counsel of my God. Now, if never before, I see how precious is that promise, 'If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, and it shall be given him. I feel that I do indeed lack this divine wisdom. The 142d Psalm speaks my feelings."

The West Indian proprietors in the Upper House* now moved for, and obtained, a committee of inquiry on West Indian affairs. "This committee," said Mr. Buxton †, "is a pretext for delay, and nothing else; I look on it as a calamity to our cause." He foresaw that its not having completed its inquiries would be urged as a motive for deferring the settlement of the question ‡; and he could not expect much impartiality from its decisions, knowing, as he did, that there was scarcely a stirring friend of emancipation in the Upper House.

To Lord Suffield.

"April 19. 1832.

"My dear Lord,— Will you have the goodness to ascertain for me, when you have an opportunity, what the powers of this hopeful committee are likely to be with regard to witnesses; whether it will authorise us to send for them from the West

* It is likely that the greater part of the non-resident proprietors were entirely ignorant of the proceedings on their estates, and of the cruelties inflicted on the slaves. Thus Mr. Lewis, in his entertaining work, "Negro Life in the West Indies," in which he does not fail to abuse Mr. Wilberforce, yet mentions his indignation, when he landed in Jamaica, at finding that his agent, who had given him glowing descriptions of his own humanity to his slaves, was in fact a worthless scoundrel, who had all the time been ill-treating them.

† At the General Meeting of the Anti-slavery Society, May, 1832.

‡ Thus, see Sir R. Peel's Speech, May 24. 1832.

Indies, &c. by agreeing to pay their expenses, and remunerate them for the loss of time and business? and whether the anti-slavery party, that is *yourself*, will have any authority or control in the committee?

"I protest, I think you Lords are even worse than we Commons, bad as we are. I could hardly listen to them in silence the night before last, or refrain from cheering the solitary voice that was lifted up for truth and righteousness. Well, much as we must lament that there are not many to echo it, how deeply rejoiced and thankful am I, and that in the name of the best part of England, and all the slaves, that there is that *one!* Personally, I cannot but congratulate you on what I consider so pre-eminently the post of honour.

'For this was all thy care,
To stand approved of God, though worlds
Judged thee perverse.' "

He writes again, a few days later, to the same friend, who was dispirited by one of the many discouragements to which the struggle exposed him.

"* * * Away with all mortification. I can truly say, that I would rather incur obloquy, and shame, and disappointment in our good cause than get glory in any other; and I know nothing of your mind if you are not of the same opinion."

Mr. Buxton was one of the numerous witnesses examined before the Lord's committee, and he gladly availed himself of the opportunity of communicating some of his abundant information, and laid before it twenty-seven documents prepared with extreme care. Although the report of the committee was indecisive, the effect of its investigations was to diffuse more knowledge and sounder principles. After its labours were closed, Lord Suffield no longer stood alone in the House of Lords.

An animated public meeting was held on the 12th of May, at which the venerable Mr. Stephen presided. Mr.

Buxton concluded the address which he made on the occasion, in these emphatic words: —

"When I call to mind the fact that, contrary to the law of nature, in a country friendly to the increase of population, it has diminished with such frightful rapidity, I would tell all who countenance such a system that they will have to account at a solemn tribunal for the 50,000 murders that have been committed through its agency When I think of this and of the cart-whip, and of the millions of stripes inflicted by that accursed instrument, I am at a loss for words to express my feelings. When I trace the system through its baleful ramifications, when I contemplate this hideous cluster of crimes, there is but one language, the language of divine inspiration, that can convey what passes within me. 'They are a people robbed and spoiled, they are all of them snared in holes, and they are hid in prison-houses; they are for a prey, and no man delivereth; for a spoil, and no man restoreth.' When we look at the career of affliction of our brother man, for, after all, he is our brother, moulded in the same form, heir to the same immortality, and, although in chains and in suffering, on a level, in the eyes of God, with the proudest noble in that committee which has been appointed to sit in judgment upon him; when I view him entering life by the desert track of bondage; when I view him writhing under the lash of his tormentor; when I see him consigned to a premature and unregarded grave, *having died of slavery;* and when I think of the preparation which we, good Christian men and women, have enabled him to make for his hereafter,— there can be but one feeling in my heart, one expression on my lips: 'Great God! how long, how long, is this iniquity to continue?'"

The position in which the Government, the West Indians, and the Abolitionists, stood to each other in 1832, was nearly that of equilibrium. The Abolitionists had received a considerable accession of Parliamentary force in the late general election, many of the candidates having pledged themselves to take the anti-slavery side. With his hands thus strengthened, Mr.

Buxton determined to press forward again the resolutions moved in the preceding year, aiming at an abolition of slavery, at once speedy and safe. But to this idea of speedy emancipation the ministers were by no means prepared to yield, though they fully admitted the principle that slavery should be finally abolished.

In the first place they felt the responsibility which makes men in power so often shrink from a hardy policy. In the second, they were compelled to consult for their own preservation, by conciliating the West Indian party. The immense Parliamentary strength of that body must be borne in mind, if we would understand the varied and often baffled course of the anti-slavery movement during this and the ensuing year. The fact was, that many of the great landowners at home held colonial property also, and inherited with it a natural hatred of that "reckless enthusiasm" which was bent on taking away their slaves. It was, therefore, the policy of the Government to avoid bringing the anti-slavery question to a crisis; to keep it at arm's length; and, by preventing it from coming to the test of a division, to escape committing themselves to either one or the other of the opposing parties.

Against such a policy it behoved the negro's advocate to stand firm. But this was rendered the more difficult to Mr. Buxton, by his hearty attachment to Whig principles, and by his personal regard for many members of the Cabinet. Besides, he looked upon the maintenance of the Whig ministry as of almost paramount importance to his own cause. By these contending considerations the perplexities of his course were greatly increased; but he daily became more impressed with the necessity of vigorous and speedy measures. Deeply versed in the state of the West Indies, it was to him a thing plain and undoubted, that no policy could be so pernicious as that

of hesitation and delay. He thought that the dangers of rapid emancipation were not nearly so great as they were held to be. He believed that a good police and kind treatment would suffice to prevent those "frightful calamities" (the result of such an act), which Sir Robert Peel "shuddered to contemplate." * He boldly stated his belief that the negroes would go to work for wages, as soon as they were released from the terrors of the whip; and that at any rate the Legislature would find it the most hopeless task in the world to do what Lord Althorp called "employing itself most usefully, in bringing the slaves to such a state of moral feeling as would be suitable to the proposed alteration in their condition." †

The statistics which he had brought forward in the previous year appeared to him to demonstrate the utter folly, as well as the utter cruelty of slavery. A system that was killing off the labourers of the colonial islands at such a fearful rate, could be of no real good to any one. The best thing to be done, as he thought, would be to get rid of it at once, whatever the cost might be.

If experience can prove anything, it seemed to him to prove the necessity of a thorough change of policy with regard to slavery. For nine years the Government had been trying the gentle means indicated by the resolutions of 1823; yet the state of the slaves was not a whit better than it had been nine years before. The mortality was advancing with the same rapid strides. Nay, in Demerara, Essequibo, Jamaica St. Christopher's, and St. Vincent, the official returns show that the loss of life was greatest *in the last three* of the twelve years during which those returns of population

* Hansard, vol. xiii. p. 65. † Ibid., vol. xiii. p. 59.

were made.* The punishments officially reported had never reached a more appalling number. The cases of individual cruelty brought to light in many quarters, but especially in the reports of the protectors of slaves, were as startling and as rife as ever. And as for religious instruction, the rancour of the planters against it, justified by their own doctrine, that it "is incompatible with the existence of slavery," † had grown stronger and more violent year by year. Besides this tried and tested hopelessness of producing any real effect by mitigatory measures, there was another still weightier reason for not delaying the day of freedom. In this case, most surely, would indecision be decisive. A moral effect had been produced by the prolonged discussions of the question. The planter had been exasperated to the highest pitch of indignation; the slave had learnt reflection, but not self-control. A breach, deadly and imminent, lay between them; and already had some mutterings been heard of the storm, which would surely burst with terrific fury, if steps were not quickly taken to turn its wrath aside.‡

Yet the Government, though enforcing their recommendations with increasing urgency, still wished to defer emancipation till "a progressive improvement should have been made in the character of the slave population by the temperate enforcement of ameliorating measures." §

Here, then, Mr. Buxton came to issue with them.

* Hansard, vol. xiii. p. 39.

† Public Meeting at Trinidad. (See Hansard, vol. xi. p. 839.)

‡ This idea of a general revolt of the negroes, was a source of constant distress to Mr. Buxton. "The gun is cocked and on the shoulder," said he, with great emphasis, in speaking of the subject to one of his friends.

§ See the Resolutions of 1823, *ante*.

Indeed, the debate on which we are about to enter (and it was one of imminent consequence) hinged on that point.

The Government first strove to prevent him from bringing his motion forward. Failing in this they endeavoured, and with success, to add to the resolution which he proposed the words "conformably to the resolutions of 1823." To this he offered a strenuous resistance; and persisted in dividing the House, so as to compel it to declare in the face of the nation what it really meant to do on this great question.

The following letter*, written by his eldest daughter to the inmates of Northrepps Cottage, gives the details of all that occurred: —

"The debate† has at length actually taken place, and great cause have we to be satisfied with the result, now that we are safe on the other side of it. It is difficult exactly to recall the feelings and opinions of the preceding days; it was however the usual course,— every possible assault from friend and foe to *make* my father put off his motion, and, when that was found hopeless, to induce him to soften it down, or not to divide the House. Dr. Lushington was of opinion that it would endanger the cause to persevere, and difference of opinion with him is worse than anything to my father. The Government were also most pressing, and the terms they offered extremely tempting. On Tuesday morning my father and Dr. Lushington were a long time with Lord Althorp and Lord Howick, both of whom used every argument and almost every entreaty. I believe he did not reply much at the time, but was cruelly beset and acutely alive to the pain of refusing them, and, as they said, of embarrassing all their measures, and giving their enemies a handle at this tottering moment. They said, besides, that the public

* This is the first of a series of letters, addressed to the same individuals, to which we shall have frequent occasion to refer.

† May 24.

were so occupied with Reform, that it was only wasting the strength of the cause; nobody would listen, and the effect would be wholly lost, whereas if he would wait a little they would all go with him; their hearts were in fact with him, and all would be smooth, if he would have a little reason and patience. On his return he related all this to us, and proposed writing a letter to Lord Althorp previous to the final interview, which was to take place the next day. So a letter was written which I will copy.

"'*To Lord Althorp.*

"'My Lord, "'May 22. 1832.

"'I am fearful lest I should have failed in conveying to you, at least in their force, the impressions under which I am acting. The fact is, from the study I have given to the subject, I am so deeply sensible of the practical as well as the inherent horrors of the system, and of the persecution and cruelties which are daily going on, that it is *impossible* for me to let this opportunity pass over without at least bearing my testimony against them. Allow me, moreover, to remind you, that, however insignificant in myself, I am the representative, on this question, of no mean body in this country, who would be, to an extent of which I believe you have no idea, disappointed and chagrined at the suspension of the question. But further (and this is a consideration far more really influential on my conduct), I cannot but feel myself the representative of a body who cannot speak for themselves, and for whom I must act, without other guide than my own conscience. There is nothing, whatever may be the result of my motion, which I should look back upon with so much regret, and I may add, shame, as the having, in any measure or degree, slighted their interest for my own convenience, or that of my friends in England, more particularly as those friends are powerful and important, while those for whom I am acting, however feebly, are helpless and oppressed. In short, I believe it to be most for their advantage that I should bring on my motion, and therefore I am necessitated to say candidly, that I cannot either postpone it or substitute for it anything short of abolition. To say I do *most reluctantly*

anything that can possibly inconvenience the present Ministry is needless and useless.

"'I am, my dear Lord, with great esteem and respect,

"'Yours most faithfully,

"'T. F. BUXTON.'

"It was early on the Wednesday morning that this letter was sent, and in the afternoon he went again to Lord Althorp, who immediately gave him to understand that he saw it was of no use attempting to turn him, and that he gave him every credit for his motive. Accordingly they resolved on their several courses, the motion and the amendment. Thursday morning, May 24th, came. My father and I went out on horseback directly after breakfast, and a memorable ride we had. He began by saying that he had stood so far, but that *divide he could not.* He said I could not conceive the pain of it, that almost numberless ties and interests were concerned, that his friends would be driven to vote against him, and thus their seats would be endangered. But then his mind turned to the sufferings of the missionaries and of the slaves, and he said after all he must weigh the *real* amount of suffering, and not think only of that which came under his sight; and that if he were in the West Indies, he should feel that the advocate in England ought to go straight on, and despise those considerations. In short, by degrees his mind was made up. When we got near the House every minute we met somebody or other, who just hastily rode up to us. 'Come on to-night?' 'Yes.'—'Positively?' 'Positively;' and with a blank countenance the inquirer turned his horse's head and rode away. I do not know how many times this occurred. In St. James's Park we met Mr. Spring Rice, whom he told, to my great satisfaction, that he positively *would* divide. Next Sir Augustus Dalrymple came up to us, and, after the usual queries, said, 'Well, I tell you frankly I mean to make an attack upon you to-night.' 'On what point?' 'You said, some time ago, that the planters were opposed to religious instruction.' 'I did, and will maintain it.' We came home and dined at three. It is difficult to recall, and perhaps impossible to convey to you, the interest and excitement of the moment. Catherine Hoare, R., and I and the little boys went down with him. We were in the ventilator

by four o'clock; our places were therefore good. For a long time we missed my father, and found afterwards he had been sent for by Lord Althorp for a further discussion, in which, however, he did not yield. Many anti-slavery petitions were presented; the great West Indian petition by Lord Chandos. At length, about six, 'Mr. Fowell Buxton' was called: he presented two petitions, one from the Archbishop of Tuam and his clergy, and the other from the Delegates of the Dissenters in and near London. The order of the day was then called, and he moved his resolution, which was for a Committee 'to consider and report upon the best means of abolishing the state of slavery throughout the British dominions, with a due regard to the safety of all parties concerned.' He spoke very well indeed, and they listened to him far better than last year; in short, the subject obviously carried much greater weight with it, and the effect of the speech last year on population was manifest, as indeed it has been ever since. He touched on that subject again, and alluded to his statement *, which he was happy to see in the hands of honourable members (he had sent it round to each a day or two before signed by himself, and there were many of them looking at it while he was speaking). I was very much pleased to see it in their hands. I will not, however, attempt to go over the debate, or to relate the speeches. Mr. Macaulay's was strikingly eloquent. Lord Howick's capital, and giving such a testimony to the speech of last year as delighted me. He said, it had indeed startled him, and that he had examined into all the facts, which he found undeniable; he evidently spoke under the effect of the impression it had made upon him. Lord Althorp proposed the amendment of adding 'conformably to the resolutions of 1823.' Then came the trial: they (privately) besought my father to give way, and not to press them to a division. 'They hated,' they said, 'dividing against him when their hearts were all for him; it was merely a nominal difference, why should he split hairs? he was sure to be beaten, where was the use of bringing them all into difficulty, and making them vote against him? He told us that he thought he had a hundred applications of this kind in the course of the evening; in short, nearly every friend he had in the

* April 15. 1831. See Hansard of that date; also Anti-Slavery Reporter, vol. v. No. 100.

House came to him, and by all considerations of reason and friendship, besought him to give way. Mr. Evans was almost the only person who took the other side. I watched my father with indescribable anxiety, seeing the members one after the other come and sit down by him, and judging but too well from their gestures what their errand was. One of them went to him four times, and at last sent up a note to him with these words, 'immovable as ever?' To my uncle Hoare, who was under the gallery, they went repeatedly, but with no success, for he would only send him a message to persevere. My uncle described to me one gentleman, not a member, who was near him under the gallery, as having been in a high agitation all the evening, exclaiming, 'Oh, he won't stand! Oh, he'll yield! I'd give a hundred pounds, I'd give a thousand pounds, to have him divide! Noble! noble! What a noble fellow he is!' according to the various changes in the aspect of things. Among others, Mr. H—— came across to try his eloquence; 'Now don't be so obstinate; just put in this one word, "interest;" it makes no real difference, and then all will be easy. You will only alienate the Government. Now,' said he, 'I'll just tell Lord Althorp you have consented.' My father replied, 'I don't think I exaggerate when I say, I would rather your head were off, and mine too; I am sure I had rather yours were!' What a trial it was! He said afterwards, that he could compare it to nothing but a continual tooth-drawing the whole evening. At length he rose to reply, and very touchingly alluded to the effort he had to make, but said he was bound in conscience to do it, and that he *would* divide the House. Accordingly the question was put. The Speaker said, 'I think the noes have it.' Never shall I forget the tone in which his solitary voice replied, 'No, sir.' 'The noes must go forth,' said the Speaker, and all the house appeared to troop out. Those within were counted, and amounted to ninety. This was a minority far beyond our expectations, and from fifty upwards my heart beat higher at every number. I went round to the other side of the ventilator to see them coming in. How my heart fell as they reached 88, 89, 90, 91, and the string still not at an end; and it went on to a 136! So Lord Althorp's amendment was carried. At two o'clock in the morning it was over, and for the first time my father came up to us in the ventilator. I soon saw that it was almost too sore a subject to touch upon; he was

so wounded at having vexed all his friends. Mr. —— would not speak to him after it was over, so angry was he; and for days after when my father came home he used to mention with real pain, somebody or other who would not return his bow. On Friday Dr. Lushington came here and cheered him, saying, 'Well, that minority was a great victory;' and this does seem to be the case; but we hardly know how to forgive some of those who ought to have swelled its numbers. My father, however, cannot bear to hear them blamed. M—— was wishing that some of those who professed so much and voted against him might be turned out. 'Oh!' he said, 'I would not hurt a hair of their heads.' He feels it a great cause for thankfulness and encouragement to have a committee sitting to consider the best means of getting rid of slavery. The formation of this committee was the next business, and very difficult indeed it was. My father went many times to Lord Althorp about it. Once Lord Althorp said, 'The fact is, Buxton, the West Indians object, not only to your friends, but to everybody who has any constituents: they won't have anybody out of schedule A.' Lord Howick's name being mentioned, Lord Althorp said, 'Why he's one of yourselves;' but added, 'We, the government, the middle party, must be represented in the committee.' My father said, 'Now, laying aside the caution of power, and all the pledges you have given, do you mean to say you don't agree with me in your heart?' He did not deny it."

In this debate, as Mr. Buxton afterwards said, "the cause made a seven-league stride." One sentence of his speech may be given: —

"How is the Government prepared to act in case of a general insurrection of the negroes? War is to be lamented anywhere, and under any circumstances: but a war against a people struggling for their freedom and their right would be the falsest position in which it is possible for England to be placed. And does the noble lord think that the people out of doors will be content to see their resources exhausted for the purpose of crushing the inalienable rights of mankind?

"I will refer the House to the sentiments of Mr. Jefferson, the President of the United States. Mr. Jefferson was himself

a slave-owner, and full of the prejudices of slave-owners; yet he left this memorable testimony: 'I do, indeed, tremble for my country, when I remember that God is just, and that his justice may not sleep for ever. A revolution is among possible events; the Almighty has no attribute which would side with us in such a struggle.'

"This is the point that weighs most heavily with me: The Almighty has no attribute that will side with us in such a struggle. A war with an overwhelming physical force,—a war with a climate fatal to the European constitution,—a war, in which the heart of the people of England would lean toward the enemy; it is hazarding all these terrible evils; but all are light and trivial, compared with the conviction I feel, that in such a warfare it is not possible to ask, nor can we expect, the countenance of Heaven. I assure the House I have been discharging a most painful duty, and my endeavour has been to perform it without offence to any one."

Mr. Buxton writes a few days afterwards to his daughter:—

"London, May 31. 1832.

"One line, if it be only to say that we are well and happy. I earnestly hope that you are the same. Pray enjoy yourself all you can: you are entitled to a holiday.

"I had a successful though laborious day yesterday. City Committees till 10 o'clock; Secondary Punishments from 1 till 4; a ride; Criminal Law from 5 till 11; the motion carried.

"To-morrow, the West-Indies Committee meets for the first time. Love to all your party, and above all to yourself, my daughter, sister, friend, companion, counsellor."

Pursuant to the amended resolution, a committee was named, of which Sir James Graham was chairman. It prosecuted its investigations from the 1st of June to the 11th of August. Yet this period was far too short for it to receive half the evidence which each side was eager to bring before it, and it broke up without coming to a definite conclusion; stating only that the condition of the affairs disclosed by its inquiries demanded the earliest and most serious attention of the Legislature.

Much of the evidence related to the insurrection of the negroes in Jamaica, which had been followed by proceedings on the part of the colonists, equally deserving the name of insurrection, had they not been perpetrated by the militia, the magistrates, and the gentry of the island. These persons had come to a resolution to maintain slavery, by putting down the religious instruction of the negroes. They accordingly destroyed seventeen chapels*, and inflicted upon the pastors and their flocks every species of cruelty and insult. "I stake my character," said Mr. Buxton, "on the accuracy of the fact, that negroes have been scourged to the very borders of the grave, uncharged with any crime, save that of worshipping their God."

He adds, in reference to the unfortunate missionaries,—

"There have not been, in our day, such persecutions as these brave and good men have been constrained to endure. Hereafter we must make selections among our missionaries. Is there a man whose timid or tender spirit is unequal to the storm of persecution? Send him to the savage, — expose him to the cannibal, — save his life by directing his steps to the rude haunts of the barbarian. But if there is a man of a stiffer, sterner nature, a man willing to encounter obloquy, torture, and death, let him be reserved for the tender mercies of our Christian brethren and fellow-countrymen, the planters of Jamaica."†

The more obnoxious missionaries, particularly Messrs. Knibb and Burchell, were driven from the island, and arrived in England at the very juncture when their evidence before the Committees was of the utmost value, and went forth to the country under Parliamentary

* See Report of the Committee, p. 270.
† Anti-Slavery Reporter, vol. v. p. 149.

sanction. They then travelled through England and Scotland, holding meetings in all the principal towns, and their eloquent appeals produced a great effect upon the public mind. Nothing, in fact, contributed more powerfully to arouse the "religious world" to a sense of their duty with regard to the question of slavery. Mr. Buxton frequently adverted to the overruling hand of Providence, which had thus turned the intolerance of the system to its own destruction.

The investigations of the Committees of both Houses were published together, and the general impression was, that they had established two points: First, that slavery was an evil for which there was no remedy but extirpation; secondly, that its extirpation would be *safe*.

The nation willingly acceded to these conclusions, and impatiently desired to act upon them. How they affected the minds of those in office we shall presently learn.

Such was the state of the slavery question when the session closed; and Mr. Buxton returned with his family to Northrepps. During a short visit to London, in September, he thus writes to his daughter: —

"Spitalfields, Sept. 27. 1832.

"Yesterday I got through all my business well; we had really an excellent Bible Meeting, and we have resolved to reform our auxiliary, upon the *celebrated* plan adopted by the ladies at Cromer. I saw T. B. Macaulay yesterday; he told me one thing, which has much occupied my mind ever since, and which furnished the subject-matter of my meditations as I rode by the light of the stars to Upton last night. He said, 'You know how entirely everybody disapproved of your course in your motion, and thought you very wrong, very hard-hearted, and very headstrong; but two or three days after the debate, Lord Althorp said to me, "*That division of Buxton's has settled the slavery question.* If he can get ninety to vote with him when he is wrong, and when most of those really interested in the subject vote against him, he can command a *majority when he is right.*

The question is settled: the Government see it, and they will take it up."' So reported Macaulay; and he added, 'Sir James Graham told me yesterday, that the Government meet in a week; they will then divide themselves into committees on the three or four leading questions, for the purpose of settling them. Slavery is one.' Now it is not so much the fact that Government are going to take into their own hands the question, for the purpose of settling it, which occupied my mind, as the consideration of the mode by which we were led to that division, to which such important consequences attach. It certainly was not the wisdom of my coadjutors; for, with the exception of my own family, Hoare, Evans, Johnston, and one or two others, they were all directly at variance with me. Brougham, when he heard of my obstinacy, said, 'Is the man mad? does he intend to act without means? He *must* give way.' It really was not the wisdom of my counsellors; and as certainly it was not either my own wisdom or resolution. I felt, it is true, clear that I was right; but I did not find it easy to explain the reason why I was so clear.

"Then as to the resolution, I found it very difficult to stand firm. I felt far more distressed than I ought to have done at acting in hostility to my friends. I was unusually weak on that point. What then led to the division? If ever there was a subject which occupied our prayers, it was this. Do you remember how we desired that God would give me His Spirit in that emergency, that He would rise up as the champion of the oppressed? How we quoted the promise, 'He that lacketh wisdom, let him ask it of the Lord, and it shall be given him?' And how I kept open that passage in the old Testament, in which it is said (2 Chron. chap. xx. 12.), 'We have no might against this great company that cometh against us; neither know we what to do, but our eyes are upon thee:' the Spirit of the Lord replying, 'Be not afraid nor dismayed by reason of this great multitude, for the battle is not yours, but God's?' If you want to see the passage, open my Bible; it will turn of itself to the place. I sincerely believe that prayer was the cause of that division; and I am confirmed in this, by knowing that we by no means calculated on the effect which that division seems likely to produce. The course we took appeared to be right, and we followed it blindly.

"I must now leave off. I am going to Sir James Graham, and the Colonial Office, to-morrow, to see what I can pick up."

It was not only from his antagonists that Mr. Buxton encountered opposition; the storm at times was almost as fierce from those who were as ardent as himself in the cause of emancipation. On the eve of the election of 1832 he suggested, in a letter to Sir George Chetwynd, that the pledge to be asked from candidates at elections should be, that they would aim at "the extinction of slavery, at the earliest period *compatible with the safety of all classes.*" This last condition was unacceptable to one section of the Anti-slavery party, whose zeal could no longer brook any degree of moderation. The following burst of "indignant astonishment" was from the pen of one of these impetuous advocates: —

"I have long condemned the advocates of emancipation, because they have not sought the deliverance of the slave till it suited the *convenience* of his oppressor to let him go free. * * * To be candid, Sir, I would rather see you throw up your brief, and take a retaining fee from the planters, than that you should, in a reformed Parliament, bring forward a motion in accordance with the sentiments expressed in your letter to Sir G. Chetwynd. And if you appear as the advocate of such a profane measure, we will look to some more enlightened advocate to forward that cause which must be carried."

Mr. Buxton's reply was as follows: —

"Dear Sir, "Northrepps, Oct. 15. 1832.

"I am so thoroughly inured to expressions of the strongest condemnation from all sides, as to my course with regard to slavery, that I should scarcely be prevailed on to notice those I have received from you, were it not that I *like* the spirit which dictates them, and should be glad if it were more general. Without therefore noticing the violence of your expressions, or questioning their propriety towards one who, however unworthy and unsuccessful, has certainly been for many years

almost wholly devoted to this cause, let me attempt to justify the letter to which you refer. I said to Sir George Chetwynd, as I have said on every other occasion, and as the words of my motion expressed, that my aim was 'emancipation at the earliest period compatible with the personal safety of all classes.' Where did you find a word of '*convenience?*' How little do you know the heavy battles I have had to fight on this very point! If the emancipation of the slaves were in my power I could not dare to accomplish it without previous police regulations, which is all the delay I mean. These ought to be undertaken instantly; for I know our power of emancipating in one way or another is fast drawing to a close: I mean, that the negroes will take the work into their own hands. But whoever else is willing to undertake the weight of so enormous a responsibility, *I am not*, without considering the personal safety of all classes. If you, my dear Sir, can send some 'more enlightened advocate,' you may believe me, that we are far too much oppressed and borne down with the weight of our task in parliament not to hail his assistance, however given. But in the meantime I must take the liberty of saying, that I did not undertake this serious work at man's bidding; nor shall I, I trust, lay it down at the bidding either of enemies or friends.

"With every good wish, and begging you to continue your exertions, and to blame me as much as you please if it will stir up one of our friends, I am, dear Sir, yours, very truly,

"T. FOWELL BUXTON.

"P. S.—Perhaps you will let my friend Sturge see this letter, and pray believe that I write in perfect good humour."

The day of freedom for the slaves was now evidently dawning, and the autumn was spent in the welcome though anxious task of preparing for that long-sought consummation. In November he went up to London to discuss his plans with Dr. Lushington: from thence he writes:—

To Miss Buxton.

"Nov. 8. 1832.

"Thanks for your letters, which always cheer me. We had a capital meeting at Lushington's last night, arranging our plan

of Emancipation; we made good progress. This morning I saw the Government on it, and they are well satisfied; our views are so much in unison with their own."

To Zachary Macaulay, Esq.

"Dec. 1832.

"I am waiting for Lushington's plan. My conclusion is, that we must stick firm and fast to our claims of justice. Immediate and total emancipation is our right, and if we yield an iota of it, it must be not for the sake of the planter, nor for the sake of Government, but for the benefit of the negro; and we must give up no more than it is the interest of the negro to surrender. In short, we must fight the battle with a single eye to the benefit of our clients the slaves."

To Miss Buxton.

"Weymouth, Dec. 14. 1832.

"Here is my first frank in this parliament; I trust that before I give my last the negroes will be elevated to the rank of freemen and Christians, and all in peace. I find by Cropper's letter that I *am standing* for the north division of the county of Lancaster; but I hope my letter will be in time to stop all proceedings. The election closed yesterday in a way which was very gratifying, and even touching to me. The town, *i. e.* the voters on both sides, took the alarm lest I should be thrown out, and I found they had, in very many instances, reserved their votes for the purpose of giving me plumpers if needful. They have shown a degree of feeling, interest, and anxiety for me which I hardly expected, and I now see that I had a strength in reserve which rendered my defeat impossible. I am now going to be chaired. I wish the boys were here to 'pursue the triumph and partake the shout.'

"I saw the sun rise in gold out of the sea, with Portland in the foreground, this morning. I never saw any thing so grand or so sublime. I am quite well and very cheery."

CHAPTER XIX.

1833.

OPENING OF THE SESSION. — GOVERNMENT UNDERTAKES THE SLAVERY QUESTION. — INCREASE OF PUBLIC FEELING. — ANXIETY AS TO THE INTENTIONS OF GOVERNMENT. — NEGOTIATIONS. — DAY FIXED FOR THE MOTION. — DISAPPOINTMENT. — AGITATION RESOLVED ON. — WHITELY'S PAMPHLET. — COMPENSATION. — ANTI-SLAVERY MEETING. — THE NATION AROUSED. — DELEGATES SUMMONED. — MEETING OF DELEGATES.

MR. BUXTON began this year — the most important of his life — by publishing a brief address to the members of the Established Church, in which he invited them, together with the principal Dissenting bodies, to unite in setting apart the 16th of January as a day of prayer on the subject of slavery. In his own prayers it was never forgotten. Just before the session commenced he thus refers to it in one of his papers.

"Northrepps, Sunday, Feb. 3. 1833.

"I go to London to-morrow. Parliament meets on Tuesday, and I have reason to hope that the King's speech will declare that Government has resolved to effect the total and immediate emancipation of the slaves.

"This then is a season, if ever there was one, for fervent prayer to thee, Almighty God, that the light of thy countenance may rest on that good cause, and on me, one of its advocates; on my dear wife and children, who will be with me in London: on those who will remain here; on those to whom they will be entrusted; on my friends and relations; in short, on all things and all persons who are dear to me.

"But first, let me commemorate thy mercies during the six months we have been here. There, too, my cause, or rather let me say thy cause, the liberation of the oppressed slave, has prospered. I have had sufficient health of body and vigour of mind in working at that cause to convince myself that I have not been altogether a faithless and indolent steward.

"Now that I am about to quit this peaceful haven, and

embark on a tumultuous sea, what provision and safeguard of prayer do I desire to carry with me?

"Grant that I and all of us may be strengthened with might by thy Spirit in the inner man, and that Christ may dwell in our hearts by faith. This is my prayer as to the spirit which may reign within. And my general prayer as to our external actions is the collect of the day, fourth Sunday after Epiphany. * * * I beg with peculiar earnestness, that the incomparable treasure of thy blessing may be with our sisters at the cottage. Health to them, if I may ask it; but, at all events, the canopy of thy wings round about them, especially in the watches of the night; strength, support, hope, and comfort in the hours of illness. I pass through a chosen list of friends and relations, and pray thee to give to *each* the peculiar gift which shall tend most to their earthly joy and the welfare of their souls; and do thou discharge the debts of love and gratitude I owe them.

"For the slavery cause my prayer is, that thou wouldst not leave it to the weakness and folly of man, but that thou wouldst rise up as its advocate, and wouldst dispose all hearts and mould all events by Thine Almighty power, to the accomplishment of that which is good and right. Oh give these thy unhappy creatures their liberty — and that liberty in peace, and protect their masters from ruin and desolation. In my labours give me always the spirit of prayer and the spirit of confidence in Thee; 'The battle is not mine, but God's:' and the spirit of discretion and resolution; 'Thine ear shall hear a word behind thee, saying, This is the way, walk ye in it, when ye turn to the right hand or to the left.'"

It was generally understood that Earl Grey's government was about to undertake the settlement of the question, and Mr. Buxton went down to the House of Lords on the 5th of February, in full expectation of hearing from the King's speech that one of the great measures of the session was to be the emancipation of the slaves. Great was his disappointment when the speech closed without any allusion whatever to the subject. He hastened back to the House of Commons, and immediately on the Speaker's return gave notice of a motion

on the 19th of March for the abolition of slavery. A few minutes afterwards one of his friends hurried up to him, and said, "I have just been with Brougham and Goderich, and they conjure you to do nothing hastily; you will wreck the cause if you do." "What! not give notice of a motion?" said he. "O, no! by no means," was the reply; "you will knock the whole thing over." "*But it's done!*" said Mr. Buxton. This prompt proceeding had an immediate effect on the Ministers. He writes two days later to Mr. Joseph John Gurney:—

"London, Feb. 7. 1833.

"You may suppose that I was affronted and vexed at the silence of the King's speech. I instantly gave notice of a motion, and last night, as you will see by the papers, I asked the Government what their intentions were. They replied, that they would undertake the question, and introduce '*a safe and satisfactory measure.*' I feel excessively relieved and delighted, and not a little thankful for this great mercy."*

He says, in a hurried note to Miss Gurney, dated from the House of Commons:—

"The Government have to-night taken the slave question into their own hands, promising to settle it 'in a safe and satisfactory manner.' This delights me, and now I scorn those critics who maintain that the children of Ham ought to be flogged by all good Christians."

A government must have been shortsighted indeed which could have hoped to keep clear of this great question. Public feeling had been of late gathering with prodigious rapidity, and a crisis was evidently near. The outcry against slavery seemed to be rising at once from every corner of the land. Men of all ranks, of all denominations, were joining in the attack. And the

* "The smiles on his countenance are delightful to see," says one of the family letters.

House itself, where but a few years before scarcely half a dozen hearty advocates for emancipation could have been numbered, was now filled with zealous friends of the cause. This rapid growth of popular opinion may be in some measure attributed to the exertions of a sub-committee of the Anti-slavery Society, called the agency committee, established by some of the more ardent friends of emancipation, who, weary of parliamentary delays, were anxious to appeal to the people, and had taken great pains, by lectures and other methods, to disseminate information through the country. The settlement of the Reform question also, in the previous year, had been eminently favourable to the Anti-slavery movement; not merely because the nation's will now held greater sway in Parliament, but also because the late struggles had roused without wearing out the nation's feelings; and never are those feelings so readily called forth as when just lulled after a storm.

The country being thus at leisure for the strife, with kindled energies and the power to enforce her will, we cannot wonder at the sudden increase of velocity with which anti-slavery principles spread through the nation in 1832–3. But the principles themselves were not the growth of a day. They had been sown when the spirit of Christianity awoke again in England, towards the latter part of the last century. The Anti-slavery movement sprang from religious principle, and thence came its strength.

Some may think that the people were misled in fancying slavery to have been cruel and unchristian; others will think that the pictures drawn of its horrors were outdone by the reality; but in either case thus much is clear, that the people had no end of their own to gain: that they were, for a while at least, looking off from

their own interests to shield those of others. It was a movement of a character as yet scarcely known in the annals of mankind. Instances we have in history of a nation arousing itself and demanding deliverance from its own wrongs, and there are few spectacles more great and noble. But in the deed before us virtue was exhibited of a far rarer kind. Impelled by the pure motive of mercy and justice, unsullied by selfish views, the English nation rose up as one man to befriend a far distant people, itself undergoing a heavy sacrifice, that oppression might cease out of the land.

It has been mentioned that the House itself partook of the same impetus as the people. This welcome change is thus referred to in one of the letters written to Northrepps Cottage: —

"My father tells us that the number of strangers who have come up and addressed him is extraordinary; and all on this subject. One gentleman, member for an agricultural county, told him that he had been five months canvassing, and that all the way through, instead of Corn Laws, or any thing else, slavery was the cry. At one out-of-the-way village they began by asking him whether he was trying to get into the Lords or Commons? 'But,' they said, 'whichever you do get into, you must vote for the poor slaves.' So it appears that there is quite a band in the House, and an army out of it. My father is very often with the ministers, and seems, on the whole, well satisfied. He said yesterday to Lord Howick (the Under Secretary for the Colonies), 'Lord Howick, you hear both sides; now tell me fairly, have we exaggerated? Are our statements correct or incorrect?' The answer was, 'I cannot say that they are correct, for they are *vastly understated.* You know not one-half of the evils of the system; you have not brought to light half its wickedness.' 'Well,' he said, 'bring in your bill, my lord, I will act under you as soon as you please.'"

But while Mr. Buxton was quite willing to give up

the conduct of the case to the ministers, he did not cease to watch their proceedings with the utmost vigilance. Hopes and fears alternated as to the nature and extent of the measures that were to be expected from them, and as the time advanced he became more and more uneasy.

He had consented to abstain from making his motion on the 19th of March, on the condition that the ministers would themselves bring in "a safe and satisfactory measure;" but some weeks had now elapsed, and still not one word had been said publicly as to their intention of fulfilling their pledge. They had named no day for a motion; they had officially announced no plan; and rumours got abroad that there were divisions in the camp, that the Government collectively had by no means decided on adopting the vigorous steps which some of its members proposed.

From ten years' experience, Mr. Buxton had but too well learnt the immense weight of the West Indian party in the councils of the nation. He knew also that the Government had the questions of Finance, India, and the Church to grapple with during this session, and were probably not so impressed as himself with the extreme danger of delaying the emanicipation of the slaves. He could not, therefore, but feel it a cause for alarm, that notwithstanding Lord Althorp's promise of a safe and satisfactory measure, so long a period should have elapsed without the appearance of any measure at all. "He is much depressed, because the ministers do not name the day; he does not know whether or not to execute his threat of bringing his motion forward next Tuesday; for this he is almost unprepared: and besides they promise so well that it seems doubtful whether it

would be right or politic to go to war with them. He sleeps badly and is very anxious." *

Since the ministers were overwhelmed with business, and fettered by their relations with the West Indian proprietors, it may naturally be asked, why did he leave the question in their hands? Backed by such a band of followers, why did he not wield all his powers, and drive forward the measure with his own hand. It was because he believed that, while emancipation in the end was certain, it was only as a cabinet measure that it could be carried through during this session; and delay, fraught as it might be with servile revolt, was the one thing that he most dreaded. He contented himself therefore with spurring on the Government, resolving not to take the lead unless compelled to do so. Nothing drew such notice from his friends as the indifference he evinced as to any personal credit to himself. "It is surprising," writes one of them, "how he puts himself entirely out of the question. It does not seem to excite one feeling in his mind, whether, after all his toils, he is to appear in the matter or not. He seems to care for *nothing*, but the advancement of the cause."

His whole heart, and soul, in fact, were given up to the work, and the depth and intensity of his feelings were visible in all his deportment; he looked pale and careworn, and his tall figure began to show signs of stooping. He spoke little, and was continually engrossed in thought. His demeanour could not be more exactly portrayed than by Spenser's lines: —

> "But little joye had he to talke of ought,
> Or ought to heare that mote delightful be:
> His mind was sole possessed of one thought
> That gave none other place."

* Letter to Northrepps Cottage, March 16.

So abstracted used he to become when engaged in his fits of musing, that often some minutes would elapse before a reply could be obtained for the simplest question.*

The 19th of March was now approaching. A letter written a few days afterwards describes the difficulties of the crisis.

"Ever since the notice was given on the first night of the session," writes his daughter, "my father has been engaged in an anxious negotiation with the ministers, who have been endeavouring to offer terms just sufficiently favourable to prevent him from adopting active measures; but on Saturday the 16th of March all hope appeared to be at an end; no day had been mentioned by the Government, and he felt that he must now make up his mind without delay. He accordingly addressed a letter to Lord Althorp, telling him so in very decided terms, and took it himself to Downing Street. He found that a council was sitting, and the porter refused to take in his letter; just then the Duke of Richmond went in, and kindly undertook to deliver it; but my father soon received a message that they could give no answer.

"On Monday, the 18th, he went down to the House, at twelve o'clock, armed with numerous petitions (one from Glasgow signed by 31,000 people), and took the opportunity of saying that he should certainly bring on his motion the next day, 'as he had no alternative left him†;' afterwards he received intelligence that the Government intended to deprive him of the day. He went down again at five o'clock, seated himself behind Lord Althorp, and said, 'So I hear these are your tactics.' Lord Althorp replied, that they really were obliged to do so, they were in such a strait.' My father gave him to understand that he should resist to the utmost, and was determined to push the matter through. After a good deal of argument and hesi-

* At this period he was threatened with a petition against his return for Weymouth, which seemed likely to be troublesome and expensive, but was afterwards withdrawn. It being remarked by a friend how provoking was this attempt to annoy him, "Oh," he replied, "it is a thousand leagues behind my slavery matters to me."

† See the Mirror of Parliament, March 18. 1833.

tation, Lord Althorp said, 'Well, if *you* will not yield, *we* must;' and accordingly agreed to name a day for a ministerial motion on the subject. All this passed in private: my father, still feeling uneasy, as no public declaration had been made, would not leave the House (which was then in committee on the Irish Coercion Bill). At three o'clock in the morning Lord Althorp got up and moved an adjournment of the debate till the following day. The effect of this would have been to deprive him of his day, he therefore went across to the opposite side of the table and said aloud that he would not give up the day unless he had satisfaction from the Government respecting the abolition of slavery; no reply was made, but the threatened adjournment was not persisted in. Accordingly, the next evening he rose to bring forward his motion. Lord Althorp then requested him to postpone it to a future time; but he replied that he was compelled to resist the request, unless upon two conditions: first, that the Government would prepare a plan for the complete and immediate abolition of slavery; and secondly, that *they would fix a day for introducing that measure to the House.*

"'I see clearly,' he said, 'what will be the fate of this great question if I postpone it without some definite assurance that it will be brought before the consideration of the House. It will be postponed for the session; * * * and then, there is much reason to fear, it will be settled elsewhere in the most disastrous manner. Therefore, however obstinate I may appear, and however painful it may be for me to resist the request, before made to me in private, and now in public, by the noble Lord, I am compelled to proceed at once with the motion, unless His Majesty's Government can fix a day on which they will be prepared to explain their plans with respect to colonial slavery.'*

"Lord Althorp upon this named the 23rd of April, and then my father formally told the Government that he gave up the question into their hands, upon the security of the declaration made to him that the proposed measure was to be safe and satisfactory."

The fears by which he had been harassed lest the ministers should allow the session to pass away without bringing any measure forward, were now at an end.

* Mirror of Parliament, March 19. 1833.

The day for the motion was fixed, and when this long-desired step was taken, he sank for a while into a feeling of profound repose. He was able to sleep at night, and began to resume his cheerfulness of manner. He thought that as the Government had been prevented from delaying the question, the grand point was gained; and that it only remained for him and his friends to await the unfolding of their measure. "I have no more to do with slavery now than any other gentleman," was an expression frequently on his lips during that interval of rest. But he soon found that he had been too sanguine; at the end of a few days fresh causes of anxiety began to arise. To his dismay, he heard a rumour that Lord Howick, on the soundness of whose principles he thoroughly relied, was about to resign his place, on the ground that the Cabinet refused to concur in his scheme of immediate emancipation. Afterwards he learned that the Government were inclined to make the negroes buy out their own freedom. The details of the measure Mr. Buxton could not learn, but the process was sure to be dilatory, and was on the face of it unjust. Full of chagrin and disappointment, he hurried to Dr. Lushington. They agreed to call a special committee of the Anti-slavery Society on the following day, and he then went home, "looking as if some heavy misfortune had befallen him." The next day the heads of the party met to deliberate on this new turn of affairs. Their opinion as to the course they should pursue was unanimous. The higher powers were clearly about to fail them; the nation was firmly on their side: why not, then, place the matter in the nation's hands?

"Flectere si nequeo superos, Acheronta movebo,"

was the feeling in every bosom there.

Having resolved to arouse the people, they spared no pains to do so with effect; and, in this endeavour, a most opportune aid was afforded them. Just at the time when they were anxious to call forth a burst of public feeling, Mr. Buxton being one morning at breakfast, surrounded as usual by papers, and deep in discussion with Mr. George Stephen, a young man named Whitely was brought in and introduced to him by Mr. Pringle, as a book-keeper who had just returned from the West Indies. He told what he had seen, a tale of cruelty and suffering such as Mr. Buxton had heard a hundred times before. The young man took his leave; but scarcely was he gone, when the thought struck Mr. Buxton, that such a picture fresh from the spot was the very thing they needed. He ran into the street without his hat, caught Whitely as he turned the corner into Portland Place, and, having brought him back, told him that he absolutely must put down this story in writing, and must also produce certificates as to his own character. These certificates proved to be highly satisfactory, and in a few days the pamphlet was in print.*

The effect was prodigious. The narrative, written in a homely but graphic style, realised to the mind of every one the real import of what he had previously heard, as to the dwindling of the population and the terrors of the lash. Truth, too, was stamped on every word. It contained indeed nothing new, but in reading Whitely's simple narrative of the common incidents of a sugar plantation, the whole scene appeared to stand before the eye. The driver looking on with lazy indifference,—the piercing cries and supplications of the miserable negro woman brought out and tied down upon the

* Three Months in Jamaica, by Henry Whitely. The certificates are given at the end of the pamphlet.

ground to receive her punishment,—the crack of the fearful cart-whip,—and the shriek of agony as it cut deep into the flesh,—appalling as the description was, yet no man could deny its truth. In four colonies, and these the best ordered, the planters had themselves sworn to the infliction of sixty-eight thousand punishments in two years. And let any man say how they could be inflicted, without these circumstances of horrible suffering and degradation.

The pamphlet spread abroad with wonderful rapidity. "Whitely," says a letter to Northrepps, "nothing but Whitely, is the order of the day; the sensation it creates is immense; the printers can scarcely supply the demand. Mr. Pringle says ten thousand have been ordered to-day." In short, within a fortnight's time, nearly two hundred thousand copies were scattered abroad.

Eager as the leaders were to urge the Government forward, by turning upon them a strong pressure of popular opinion, they were at the same time most anxious to preserve their alliance, and keep them in the front of the movement, by every allowable concession. And the first concession which the Government required was the concurrence of the abolitionists in granting compensation to the planters.

On this question the opinions held by the Anti-slavery leaders were not those of the main body of their followers. The former maintained, that neither law nor custom could give one man a real claim to the possession of another; and, therefore, they could not admit that the planters had any *moral right* to compensation. On the other hand, they were both willing and desirous to give compensation, first, because they thought that a bonus to the planters was the best if not the only way of obtaining emancipation with safety to

all parties; secondly, because they heartily desired that, while the negroes were set at liberty, the planters should not be exposed to a ruinous loss. But the greater number of their followers did not comprehend the real position of affairs. They were not aware of the relative strength of the three parties in Parliament, nor did they perceive that, unless a junction were effected with the Government, success could not be insured against the West Indians.

Carried away by their anxiety to do justice to the negro, they deemed all compromise, and all concession to his owner, a dereliction of principle; nor could they endure the idea of striking a bargain with the oppressor. It is likely, also, that, in the minds of many, a feeling of personal hostility towards the planters had grown up during the long continuance of the contest. Mr. Buxton, therefore, and his more temperate coadjutors, had now to undertake that task which has so frequently dethroned the leaders of a popular movement,—that of teaching their followers to rein in their zeal.

It was determined that the idea of acquiescing in some system of compensation should be broached to the Anti-slavery Society at its approaching annual meeting. This meeting was held on the 2nd of April: Lord Suffield was in the chair, while Mr. Buxton undertook the delicate task of introducing the proposal.

His friends listened with extreme anxiety as he commenced his speech: for a time he seemed to hover about the subject, as if shrinking from his task; but at length he grappled boldly with it, and his appeal was met with apparently unanimous applause. He was ably followed by Dr. Lushington, Mr. Joseph J. Gurney, and others; and their exertions appeared to be crowned with unexpected success.

But nothing can be more transient than such triumphs of oratory, which can only withdraw a party for an instant from its natural career. Smooth as the beginning seemed, at this point commenced divisions in the ranks of the abolitionists, and the seeds of discord were sown, which bore fruit in due season, though happily too late to be of injury to the cause.

But while the leaders of the Anti-slavery party made this concession to the Government, they still deemed it necessary to rally all their forces, and render their victory complete. The Government certainly was pledged to effect emancipation; but the details of their measure — how and when it was to be brought about — were still undetermined. Lord Goderich had been created Earl of Ripon, and Mr. Stanley had succeeded him as Secretary of the Colonies, while Lord Howick's place was supplied by Mr. J. Shaw Le Fevre. The change of hands in itself could not at such a momentous crisis be otherwise regarded than as a serious disadvantage. Mr. Buxton felt great anxiety as to the line that would be adopted by the new Colonial Secretary, and he watched for the first tokens of his feelings with no small solicitude. He greatly regretted the loss of Lord Howick from the Colonial Office; and he further apprehended that the change might imply an intention on the part of the Government to resist more steadily the growing pressure of Anti-slavery feeling in the country.

Nor was solicitude confined to Mr. Buxton and his friends. The Government had their full share of anxiety. Indeed Mr. Stanley's position, in the midst of so many conflicting interests, was one of great difficulty, and he found it necessary to postpone his motion till the 14th of May.

Now, therefore, when full success might be gained by

a vigorous effort, or lost if that effort were not made, now was the time to bring every force to bear, and to sweep away all obstacles by an irresistible impetus of public feeling. This was the moment to make the Government feel to what a pitch the hatred of slavery had risen. Nor was it difficult. The meeting in Exeter Hall, and the publication of Whitely's pamphlet, had led the way. These first steps were followed up by the most vigorous proceedings, under the direction chiefly of Mr. George Stephen and Mr. Pringle, whose services were of essential value at this critical juncture. Lectures were delivered in all the counties of the kingdom. Crowded meetings were everywhere held, and the friends of the cause bestirred themselves from one end of the country to the other. The newspapers and periodicals caught the enthusiasm. The cause of mercy seemed the cause of religion, and many of the clergy and dissenting ministers did not hesitate to urge upon their flocks the sinfulness of slavery, and the righteousness of joining heart and hand for its overthrow. The flame soon spread far and wide; from every corner of the land petitions poured in, breathing the earnest desires of the people; from Devonshire came five hundred, from West Essex three hundred; the number of signatures attached to the petitions presented this session were calculated to amount to nearly a million and a half; and just at this moment, when the ferment was highest, a step was taken which gave double effect to all the previous proceedings. A circular was addressed by the committee to the friends of the cause in every considerable town, requesting them to appoint delegates, who were to meet in London on the 18th of the month, to represent in person the wishes of the nation.

Mr. Buxton had been, with Mr. James Stephen,

spending a few of these eventful days in a delightful, and, as it proved, a farewell visit to Mr. Wilberforce, at his son's house at East Farleigh; but when the day for the assembling of the delegates drew near, he returned to town, and again plunged into the whirlpool of affairs. During the heat of the conflict, the rush of business at his house can hardly be imagined. As he usually returned late from the House, and slept very badly, he was rarely down in the morning till 10 or 11 o'clock, and long before he had finished dressing, the applicants for admission began to pour in. To him, as the Anti-slavery leader, every one who had any connection with the utmost border of the subject felt at liberty to apply. Besides his London coadjutors in the cause, he was often visited by those who had been active in promoting it in the country, and who wished for his advice or encouragement. Then there were people from the West Indies, teeming with complaints, arguments, and information—some come in the hope of convincing him by their individual experience that he was all in the wrong; some to confirm his impression that he was all in the right; angry planters come to expostulate; missionaries, teachers, and negroes come to lay their cases before him, or to supply him with intelligence. His house, which had before been a kind of depôt of Anti-slavery petitions, was now half-filled with them; in every corner they lay in heaps, with letters and papers from all parts of England. Anxious consultations were going on among the leaders of the party in London. The call for delegates had been answered to an unexpected extent; and the question now arose how most prudently and effectively to wield the force about to join them. Nor was the moment unattended with anxiety. It was very doubtful whether so many earnest advocates could be

brought to act in concert; each had his own conscientious scruples; and does there exist anything more wayward and hard to manage than the conscience of a scrupulous Englishman? They were not unlikely to mistake matters of expedience for matters of principle, and, in particular, to think that it would be a crime to give the planter compensation, however much the interests of the negro might require the concession. "People's principles are the greatest nuisances in life," playfully exclaimed Mr. Buxton, when he returned from the first meeting of 330 delegates in Exeter Hall. It was an occasion which called forth all his tact and powers of argument; but the delegates, strong and independent as their views were, placed a generous confidence in their leaders, and a sufficient degree of unanimity was at length obtained.

It was necessary to frame an address to the Premier which should embody their sentiments. This difficult task fell to the lot of Mr. J. J. Gurney, and the paper which he prepared received a cordial assent. On the ensuing day they met again in Exeter Hall, and proceeded in a body to Downing Street. Drawn as they had been from almost every place of note in the United Kingdom, they included in their ranks men of every calling and denomination; among them were to be seen, we are told, "merchants, squires, bankers, magistrates, clergymen, and dissenting ministers." Lord Althorp and Mr. Stanley received them; and after Mr. Samuel Gurney had read the address and commented on it, Mr. Buxton stepped forward and pointed out the extent of the movement which had sent the delegates thither. "This, my lord," said he, "is the deputy from Cork, — this is the one from Belfast; these are from Edinburgh, those from Dundee; this gentleman is

from Aberdeen, that from Carmarthen; these are the delegates from Bristol, those from Liverpool, Birmingham, Manchester, Sheffield; these from York and Leeds," &c.

It cannot be doubted that this manifestation had a great effect on the Government; it was the first occasion on which public feeling so emphatically expressed itself, and it was felt to be called forth by no ordinary earnestness of purpose. Mr. Stanley afterwards acknowledged its importance, but, at the time, he gave no further pledge than that he would not again postpone his motion. With this the applicants were, for the present, compelled to be satisfied. They retired, and on the same day dined together. When the cloth was removed, Mr. Buxton spoke with great feeling, expatiating more than was usual with him on his deep sense of the Providence that had attended their course, as well as on the hopes for the future, and the motives and principles by which they ought to be governed. He ended with "gladly seizing a long-wished-for opportunity of bearing testimony to the merits of the real leader of this cause — the Anti-slavery tutor of us all — Mr. Macaulay."

CHAPTER XX.

SLAVERY. 1833.

DEBATE, MAY 14.—MR. STANLEY'S SPEECH.—RESOLUTIONS PASSED.—BLAME ATTRIBUTED TO MR. BUXTON.—LETTERS.—BILL BROUGHT IN.—DEBATE ON APPRENTICESHIP.—ON COMPENSATION.—PROGRESS OF THE BILL THROUGH THE HOUSE OF COMMONS.—THROUGH THE HOUSE OF LORDS.—PASSED.—LETTERS.

THE Government plan was now expected with the utmost anxiety. In the interval, Mr. Buxton, who stood much in need of rest and quiet, retreated with his daughters to a fishing cottage at Dagenham Beach, near the Thames, belonging to Mr. Fry. This could be reached only by water, and afforded the most perfect seclusion. "We trust," writes one of the party, "not to see the face of a visitor nor the direction of a letter till Monday the 13th." Dr. Lushington remained in town to watch the progress of affairs. Many contradictory reports were afloat, and Mr. Buxton's brief holiday was spent in deep meditation on the course he should pursue. His eldest daughter thus writes from Dagenham:—

"Saturday, May 11. 1833.

"Here we are in our singular retirement, living out of doors on the rich bank, which is overflowing with grass and flowers, and watching the hundreds of fine ships, which from here seem to float among the fields; but when we climb the bank, there lies the river stretched out—its lovely reaches glittering in the sun. We have tasted some real enjoyment in the exuberance of spring in this place; but far more in seeing my dear father

wandering about without his hat for hours together. He has, I fear, been reflecting too deeply during these walks. A set of harassing letters came from London yesterday, which immediately gave him a sharp headache."

At last the 14th of May arrived. Mr. Buxton afterwards told his daughter, that just as they were going off to the House on that memorable evening—perhaps the most memorable of his life—he had reached his study door, when he went back to have one look at his Bible. It opened on the fifty-eighth chapter of Isaiah, and he read those two verses, "If thou draw out thy soul to the hungry, and satisfy the afflicted soul; then shall thy light rise in obscurity, and thy darkness be as the noon day; and the Lord shall guide thee continually," &c. "The remembrance of them preserved me," he said, "from being in the least anxious the whole evening; I felt so sure the promise would be fulfilled to me, 'The Lord shall guide thee continually.'"

The proceedings of the evening commenced with the presentation of a huge petition from the females of Great Britain. The scene is thus described in the Mirror of Parliament:—

"Mr. Fowell Buxton, on presenting the petition from the females of Great Britain, said, 'Ten days ago this petition was not prepared; it was not even in contemplation: but within that short period, without any solicitation whatever, it has received from all parts of the country through which it has been circulated, no less than 187,000 signatures. I wish to consult you, Sir, as to the manner in which I am to get it to the table, for it is so heavy that I really am unable to carry it.'

"The Speaker, 'If the hon. gentleman cannot bring up the petition himself, he must procure the assistance of some other members of the House.'

"Three hon. members then went out with Mr. Buxton, and by the united exertions of the four, the petition was brought in

and placed upon the table," (as we are told elsewhere,) "amidst the laughter and cheers of the house."*

Mr. Stanley then opened the debate. He had been Colonial Secretary little more than a month, yet he showed that, vast as the subject was, he had in that short time completely mastered its details, had become conversant with all its dangers and difficulties, and was prepared to settle it for ever. He began by noticing the depth and extent of public feeling upon the question of slavery, and that this feeling had its source in religious principle.

"There is," he said, "throughout the country, from one end of it to the other, a determination, a determination the more absolute and irresistible, because it is founded in that deep religious feeling, on that solemn conviction of principle, which admits of no palliative or compromise, and which has declared itself in a voice to which no minister can be deaf, and which no man who watches the signs of the times can misunderstand."

He then entered into the history of the case, pointing out how confidently Parliament had looked for the co-operation of the colonial legislatures, and that in these expectations "the country had been grievously disappointed."

* This bulky document was the result of a very simple movement. A short form of petition was sent through the country with the intimation that, if sheets of signatures were sent in by Monday the 13th, they would be appended to the original in London. The time being so short, many answers to this appeal were not anticipated, but by the appointed day they poured in from all parts of the country in numbers almost unmanageable.

The preparation of the petition is thus described by a member of the Ladies' Committee:—"We were hard at work at it from ten in the morning till past nine at night. The two petitions became enormous; much heavier than we could move, or even roll over; so we had two men to each, tureens of paste, and everything in proportion. They were like two great feather beds. One broke entirely to pieces, and we had to begin it all again, so we kept bracing them with broad tape, and at last they were sewn up, each in a great sacking, and sent off, the one to Lord Suffield, the other to Mr. Buxton, for presentation."

"The voice," he said, "of friendly warning — the voice of authority has been found to be in vain. Not a single step has been taken by any one of the colonial legislatures with a view to the extinction of negro slavery."

After asserting the right of the mother country to legislate for the colonies, he proceeded to show that the distresses of the colonists were not owing "to the unceasing efforts of the abolitionists," and the discussion of the slavery question in Parliament; and he read documents to prove that those distresses existed to the same extent, not only before slavery was discussed, but even in the days of the slave-trade.

He then entered forcibly into the arguments founded on the rapid decrease of population, and the immense amount of punishments with the whip, proving the pregnant and dreadful fact, that, as the population diminished, the number of stripes increased.

"We are told," he said, "that the slaves at the present moment are unfitted for the enjoyment of the blessings of freedom; that they have no domestic ties and no habits of industry; that they do not provide for their wants, and would not provide for their families; that they have no forethought, no discretion; and that, in short, they would be totally ruined, were you to throw them loose upon the world. * * * Sir, it is slavery which debars them from acquiring industrious habits; it is slavery which prevents them from exercising the virtues of foresight and prudence; it is slavery which leaves them nothing to labour for; it is slavery which takes away from them all the incentives to industrious labour, which debars them from all the ties of social intercourse; and then you declare them to be ignorant of the duties of social life,—that they have no foresight, no industry, no prudence, no discretion, and therefore they must continue in a state of slavery!"

Up to this point Mr. Buxton and Dr. Lushington had been listening to the speech with satisfaction and

delight. The very principles, the very facts, the very arguments which they had for years been endeavouring to impress upon the House, they had now heard enforced from the Treasury Bench, with the splendid eloquence of Mr. Stanley.*

But when Mr. Stanley turned from the general principles on which he proposed to act, to his scheme for their application, the feelings of the advocates of the negro underwent a painful change. His plan contained the following main propositions, — some good, some, as they conceived, fraught with evil.

That slavery be abolished throughout the British dominions.

But that the present slaves should be apprenticed for a certain period of time to their former owners; that is, should be bound to labour for their former masters during three-fourths of the day, the master in return supplying them with food and clothing.

Part of the slave's value would be secured in this way to his former owner. The remainder was to be paid by England in the shape of a loan of 15,000,000*l.* sterling (afterwards changed to a gift of twenty millions).

All children under six years old were to be at once set completely free. Stipendiary magistrates were to be appointed to carry out these measures, and provision

* In reference to Mr. Stanley's adoption and illustration of their sentiments, Mr. Buxton afterwards quoted Cowper's lines to Mrs. Courtenay:—

"My numbers that evening she sung,
And gave them a grace so divine,
As only her musical tongue
Could infuse into numbers of mine.
The longer I heard, I esteemed
The work of my fancy the more,
And e'en to myself never seemed
So tuneful a poet before."

was to be made for the religious and moral training of the negro population.

The negro was to be liable to corporal punishment if he refused to give his due portion of labour.

When Mr. Stanley had announced the resolutions of which these were the leading features, their further discussion was adjourned to the 30th of May.

Upon the whole, Mr. Buxton was satisfied with the result of the evening, for although some of the proposed arrangements were utterly distasteful to him, he looked forward to great modifications of the obnoxious clauses during the progress of the bill through Parliament. According to his invariable practice, he laid the matter before God in frequent and earnest prayer.

The following was the substance of his supplications at family prayers, on the second morning after the announcement of the Government measure: —

"We beseech thee, O Lord, to be thyself the champion of the captives; their champion, yet not the avenger of their sufferings. We pray thee so to assist this great work, that it may be the means of spreading temporal peace, ease, and industry among the negroes, and of leading them spiritually to the knowledge of God, that by it millions may be brought into thy happy fold. And for those who have laboured in this good and great work, may their reward be in the outpouring of thy Spirit; may they live in thy light, and may their darkness be removed for ever; may the Lord guide them continually; may their soul be like a watered garden, and may they be satisfied in drought. Bless the country that shall make this amazing sacrifice.

"And now I desire to return thanks unto thee, O Lord, for the great mercies thou hast shown us; that thou hast turned the hearts of those who have influence and power, and made them to be labourers in the cause of the oppressed. We thank thee, that thou, at length, hast shown thine own power and come forth."

The discussion of the resolutions occupied the House till the 12th of June. At this point the grand object of the Anti-slavery leaders was to see the Government and Parliament fully committed to the measure. "For," said Mr. Buxton, "were an amendment on this plan to be moved and carried, and we were in consequence to lose this measure altogether, an insurrection would inevitably take place, and I confess I cannot with firmness contemplate so horrible a termination of slavery." * Therefore while protesting against the apprenticeship, they abstained from dividing the House upon it till the principle of the bill had been admitted. They also acquiesced in the grant of compensation to the planters. On the clause relating to the moral and religious instruction of the negroes: —

"I shall move," said Mr. Buxton, "as an amendment, the words which have been used by the Right Hon. Secretary in his speech, namely that the system of instruction shall be conducted, not on exclusive, not on intolerant, but on 'liberal and comprehensive principles.'† I am the more anxious on this point, as I know, on the one hand, the extreme animosity of the colonists to all religious teachers of their slaves except those of the Church of England, while on the other, I know the vast benefits which the dissenting missionaries have imparted, and are likely to impart, to the negro population. I think a system of perfect and unbounded toleration ought to prevail in the West Indies as in England."

But the main features of the plan were, "apprenticeship for the negro," and "compensation to the planters;"

* Mirror of Parliament, June, 1833.

† The words were inserted, but when the bill came before the Lords the Duke of Wellington moved their omission as an amendment: it was, however, negatived. "Were you not much amused," Mr. Buxton wrote at the time, "to see the Duke of Wellington's protest against my words, 'liberal and comprehensive?' This did us real service, giving fifty-fold emphasis to the terms, and preventing the possibility of their being forgotten."

and these were so extremely obnoxious to the more vehement abolitionists, that Mr. Buxton was most severely blamed for having acquiesced in the principle of a measure of which these formed an essential part. He should, they said, have at once gone to war with the Government. But his own deliberate opinion was, that if this measure were refused no other would be obtained; and therefore he was most anxious to modify rather than to reject it. Dr. Lushington took the same view, and by degrees they had the satisfaction of finding that all their original coadjutors acquiesced in its prudence.

But the Anti-slavery movement was outstripping its leaders. In so large and zealous a body as that which now followed them, there could not but be many so earnestly bent on the success of their cause as to be unable to heed the obstacles which still blocked the way, and who,

> "Forgetting
> That policy, expecting not clear gain,
> Deals ever in alternatives,"*

looked with extreme jealousy on the slightest concessions made by their chiefs. And thus the party quickly fell into two sections, one of which was ready to make any reasonable sacrifice in order to attain success, while the other firmly opposed all compromise, looking on it as a breach of principle. This latter section, dissatisfied with the moderate counsels of the original committee, had already established another of its own, under the name of the "Agency Committee."

There soon appeared in the newspapers a resolution purporting to come from this committee, in which Mr. Buxton was severely condemned; and indeed his fidelity to the cause more than questioned.

* Philip Van Artevelde.

This proceeding, authoritative as it professed to be, proved afterwards to have been the production of only two individuals. On first hearing of it he was naturally hurt and indignant; but with him it was easy to forgive a personal slight, when it sprang from zeal for the slave. Instead of expressing any resentment, he wrote those two individuals a letter, in which he calmly pointed out how entirely they had mistaken his views, and expostulated in mild terms against the severity of their censure.

But when a certain member of Parliament thought to ingratiate himself with his constituency by calling Mr. Buxton to account, through the medium of the public press, for his anxiety to keep terms with the Government, he addresssed him as follows: —

"Sir, Dagenham, June 17. 1833.

"The undoubted zeal and honesty in the cause of the abolition of slavery, of the two gentlemen who, in the name of the Agency Committee, passed and published the resolution of the 13th of June, called for an explanation from me, and I have given it, by showing that they had misconceived the facts, and had ascribed language to me which I never used.

"But what title *you* may have to demand an explanation of my conduct, through the medium of the newspapers, still remains a mystery to me.

"For ten long years we have been fighting the arduous battle of the Anti-slavery cause. You never offered us that assistance which we should have so thankfully received—you never touched that heavy burden with one of your fingers; the first and the last manifestation of your zeal occurred on the eve of the election of 1832, and even that was not of the most unequivocal description,—it was not an offer on your part to serve the cause, but an entreaty that the cause might serve you.

"You have a right in the House of Commons to question my Parliamentary conduct. I shall be in my place to-morrow at

twelve o'clock, and shall be happy to hear, and anxious to reply to, your accusation.

"Your obedient servant,

"T. FOWELL BUXTON."

To a vote of censure passed on him by a committee in the country, he thus replied: —

London, June, 1833.

"Our cause, I trust and believe, is essentially prospering. Patience and confidence we cannot perhaps expect from lookers-on; but we are not therefore absolved from our duty to God and the negro race to act according to the best of our judgments and consciences, and this I can safely affirm I, at least, have done. My character is of very little consequence. Indeed, had I not long ago learnt that I must sacrifice that, as well as almost all else, to this cause, I should, between my foes and my friends, have led a very unhappy life. But I have learnt that, severe as is the task of incurring the displeasure of those I esteem, my duty frequently calls for it, and I acknowledge myself amenable to no human tribunal in this cause. * * * Pray believe that I write in perfect good humour; but it is necessary I should be independent, and independent I will be, or how can I give an account of my stewardship?"

He details some time afterwards his own justification of his conduct to Mr. Joseph Sturge: —

"After Sturge had acknowledged the purity of my motives, he added, 'But it cannot be denied that you acted against the wish of many of the delegates; and if you had stood firm the planters would have got no compensation.' 'Perhaps so,' said I; 'they no compensation, and we no extinction of slavery: or rather it would have been extinguished by a rebellion. Besides what right had they to expect that I would follow their opinion when I thought it wrong? I protest I would rather sweep the streets than enter Parliament pledged to do just as they bid me. Happy am I that I never was servant to those who admit my motives, and yet almost denounce me for my conduct. I serve a Master in this matter who will receive my intentions in lieu of my acts, and pardon the errors of my judgment in consideration of the purity of my motives.' I added, 'You and I differ

in our principle; you hold by abstract justice, I consider myself the counsel of the negro. I will either speak or hold my tongue, agitate or not stir a finger, as the interests of the negro may require."

In the midst of these attacks, it was most cheering to Mr. Buxton to receive assurances of sympathy and approbation from those veterans of the cause whose opinions he most highly valued.

Mr. Wilberforce thus expresses himself to Mr. W. Smith: —

"Bath, June 25. 1833.

"I have but one moment to-day at my command, but I cannot bear to remain silent, when your letter touches a string which vibrates in my inmost soul. I feel more indignant than I can well express at the unworthy treatment dear honest Buxton has experienced. Even had he been mistaken in his judgment, yet, knowing the purity of his motives, and the zeal, and the anxiety, and the labour which he has been experiencing, any liberal man would have taken him to his bosom, and endeavoured to cheer and to comfort him. I entirely concur with you as to our true policy."

One of the letters to Northrepps Cottage says —

"The career of victory has been mixed with many personal humiliations and mortifications; and now the Anti-slavery people are so violently turned against my father for not voting against the twenty millions that they can hardly find words to express their displeasure. I must say that his spirit through all is wonderful. He is as uninfluenced by the attacks of friends as of foes, and goes straight on to his mark with a degree of firmness which, considering it is unaided by that very supporting quality, natural obstinacy, seems almost incomprehensible.

"Every day he receives violent letters of censure, from one party for voting for the money, from another for saying the planters have no right to it; but he is under such a deep and powerful impulse for the good of his cause, that nothing else touches him. He seems to be devoted to it in a way that renders him insensible to minor influences, and reminds one of

the description of Howard, in Foster's Essay on Decision of Character. Self is strangely forgotten by him; not subdued or resisted, but genuinely forgotten."

When Mr. Stanley's bill was brought in, Mr. Buxton was disappointed to find that it retained the obnoxious points in full force. He writes: —

"London, July 6. 1833.

"I do not think our slavery matters are going on very well. The Government are going to bring in their bill to-night. It retains the apprenticeship for twelve years, which makes me very indignant, and would make me very unhappy, if I did not indulge the hope that we shall be able to beat them out of it in committee."

To Thomas Pringle, Esq.

"July 16.

"In all our deliberations at this moment, the first question which arises is, at what stage of the bill we ought to make our opposition to it.

"I am decidedly of opinion that it ought *not* to be on the second reading. It seems to me that, in the first place, we ought to muster all our strength for an occasion on which we *could* hope to be victorious, and this we certainly *could not* on the second reading. Moderate men of all parties would tremble at the idea of throwing the bill out.

"Secondly, because I think, even if we *could* we *ought not* to throw out a bill of this kind, and at this period of the session, till we see what is done to it in committee; for though we know the sentiments of ministers, we do not know those of Parliament. I should be exceedingly terrified at the idea of throwing out the bill without giving it this chance; an awful conclusion might ensue, and it behoves us to give no vote which, in that event, we could not review with satisfaction. *The good of the negroes* ought to be our sole guide, and I cannot believe, if they could judge, they would wish us to throw out this bill on the second reading.

"We must allow no feelings to interfere with this great principle, — no subordinate motives, no want of lavish liberality, — supposing our object really gained. Then, in committee, we

must muster all our strength for the most vigorous opposition to the objectionable clauses, and if we direct it judiciously and exert it fully, I feel a great hope of gaining our point.

"I hope my friends distinctly understand that my point is to overthrow the apprenticeship at the price of the twenty millions.

"To this end, I think, all our efforts should be directed; and the committee seems to me the right time for making our attack."

According to that plan of operations which had excited so much angry feeling, Mr. Stanley's bill was allowed to pass through the second reading undisputed, but no sooner had it come under committee than the battle began.

The first and most important struggle was on the duration of the apprenticeship.* Mr. Buxton moved an amendment for limiting it to the shortest period necessary for establishing the system of free labour, and suggested the term of one year; "for," he said, "if we are to have neither wages nor the whip, neither hope nor fear, neither inducement nor compulsion, how any one can suppose that we shall be able to obtain the labour of the negroes, is to me unintelligible."

After a spirited debate the amendment was lost, though only by a minority of seven; but as Lord Howick observed, the first fruits of the discussion were gathered the next day, when Mr. Stanley consented, in deference to the wishes of the House, to reduce the period of apprenticeship from twelve to seven years.

In the course of the debate, on the 24th inst., Mr. Stanley "warned his honourable friend (the member for Weymouth), that any expression falling from him would come upon the minds of the negroes with much greater

* July 24. See Mirror of Parliament for the course of the Slavery Bill.

weight than any similar expression coming from any other person."

In his reply, Mr. Buxton said:—

"The right honourable gentleman has done me the honour to say, that the language which I hold towards the negroes may have some influence upon them. If I thought that were the case,—if indeed the faintest echo of my voice could ever reach them—most earnestly, most emphatically, would I implore them, by every motive of duty, gratitude, and self-interest, to do their part towards the peaceful termination of their bondage. I would say to them, 'The time of your deliverance is at hand; let that period be sacred, let it be defiled by no outrage, let it be stained by no blood, let not the hair of the head of a single planter be touched. Make any sacrifice, bear any indignity, submit to any privation, rather than raise your hand against any white man. Continue to wait and to work patiently; trust implicitly to that great nation and paternal government who are labouring for your release. Preserve peace and order to the utmost of your power,—obey the laws, both before and at the time of your liberation,—and when that period shall arrive, fulfil the expectations of your friends in England, and the promises they have made in your name, by the most orderly, diligent, and dutiful conduct!'"

When the question of compensation came under discussion, Mr. Buxton was strongly urged to oppose it, as the apprenticeship clauses had not been given up. The difficulties that beset him are thus described*:—

"Mr. Stanley declares that if any point is carried against him regarding the grant he will throw up the bill; whether or not to run this risk is now the very point of the matter, and numerous are the dilemmas the question involves. We had quite a levee this morning; Messrs. Pringle, Cropper, Sturge, Moorson, and George Stephen, all came in at breakfast-time, and my father made them a speech, telling them that on such a difficult and critical point he would never enter the House with his hands tied. They wanted him to promise to fight the money

* Letters to Northrepps Cottage.

battle, and to defeat Mr. Stanley, if possible. He will not promise to do any such thing, and says he must be at full liberty to act according to the discretion of the moment. They went away to deliberate upon it, and it is now time to go down to the House again. He told me he trusted but in one thing—'The Lord shall guide thy steps.'"

In the division which followed, Mr. Buxton voted for the grant of 20,000,000*l.* to the planters *, "as giving the best chance and the fairest prospect of a peaceful termination of slavery," but he moved as an amendment that one-half of that sum should not be paid till the apprenticeship should have terminated. He thought this would act as a check upon the planters in their treatment of the apprentices. This amendment was thrown out.

Mr. Buxton thus writes to a friend on the 1st of August:—

"I must tell you how comfortable and happy I feel to-day. Last night at twelve o'clock we got through the committee; the bill, therefore, for the abolition of slavery must pass this session, and may Providence make it a blessing to millions. We were defeated upon my proposal to hold back half the money till the apprenticeship was over. Stanley declared that if we carried that proposal he would throw up the bill. I thought it right, however, to persevere, but I must confess that I should have felt anxious if we had obtained a victory. The newspapers give but a wretched report of the debate, which was one of the best we ever had.

"Upon the whole I went to bed well pleased. To-morrow night we have the report, and on Monday the third reading. How grand it is to be so near the top of the mountain, which it has taken ten years to climb!"

* The following afternoon his sister, Mrs. Forster, asked him "if he had not acted hastily in giving his vote for compensation?" "No," replied he, slowly rising off the sofa, and speaking with great deliberation, "No: I would do the same again. I did it to save bloodshed; that was my motive, and I am glad I did it."

The joy with which the abolitionists looked forward to the speedy termination of their labours in behalf of the slaves was tempered by an event of deep interest to them,—the death of Mr. Wilberforce. The great leader expired on Monday the 29th of July, having, shortly before his death, exclaimed with fervour, "Thank God that I should have lived to witness a day in which England is willing to give twenty millions sterling for the abolition of slavery."

The announcement of his death was received by the House of Commons, then in the midst of the discussion on compensation, with peculiar feeling. Mr. Buxton referred to the event, and, in expressing his love and admiration for the character of Mr. Wilberforce, applied to him the beautiful lines of Cowper: —

> "A veteran warrior in the Christian field,
> Who never saw the sword he could not wield;
> Who, when occasion justified its use,
> Had wit, as bright as ready, to produce;
> Could draw from records of an earlier age,
> Or from Philosophy's enlighten'd page,
> His rich material—and regale the ear
> With strains it was a luxury to hear."

On the 7th of August, 1833, the Bill for the Total Abolition of Colonial Slavery passed the Lower House.

"The bill has already passed the House of Commons two or three hours," writes Miss Buxton to Mr. Macaulay; "would that Mr. Wilberforce had lived one fortnight longer, that my father might have taken back to him *fulfilled*, the task he gave him ten years ago!"

Mr. Buxton writes on the following day: —

"London, Aug. 8.

"I have been intensely engaged in winding up, or watching the winding up, of this the main object of my life. The bill passed its third reading last night, and I cannot but feel deeply relieved and thankful, great as are its faults. May a blessing

be with it! The fullest toleration we have, I trust, obtained. And now the thing is done; and all the duty respecting it which remains for us is to do our utmost to render both the people of England and the negroes satisfied with it, and to labour for the religious instruction of the latter."

The bill now went with little delay through the House of Lords. Mr. Buxton thus alludes to Lord Suffield's exertions on that occasion: —

"When the bill reached the Upper House, Lord Suffield's task was of the most difficult and laborious kind. Dr. Lushington and I, and some others used to go and spend hour after hour at the bar of the House of Lords, watching our friend in his arduous conflict; and I find that scarcely any one of the many memorable scenes and incidents of that session has left so strong an impression upon my memory, as witnessing his unsupported but determined struggle over each clause of the bill, as it passed through the Committee of the whole House."

"On Tuesday, the 20th," writes Miss Buxton, "was the third reading in the Lords. Dr. Lushington came in afterwards, unexpectedly, to dinner; he was just setting off for his holidays, and seemed very much pleased with the events of the session, which he discussed in the most lively manner. Lord Althorp said to him in the House, a few days ago, 'Well! you and Buxton have wielded a power too great for any individuals in this House. I hope we shall never see such another instance.' Among other incidents, it was mentioned that one day, in the House of Lords, Lord Grey went up to my father to speak to him about yielding the 'removal' question. The Duke of Wellington said, 'I see what the influence is under which you are; and if that individual is to have more power than Lords and Commons both, we may as well give up the bill.' All the Commons' ministers who were standing there were highly entertained."

T. F. Buxton, Esq., to Zachary Macaulay, Esq.

"My dear Friend, "August 20. 1833.

"Priscilla will tell you what was done last night in the Lords' Committee. The result was, that after two or three rather mis-

chievous alterations the report passed. The Government told me that the Tories had collected their strength and were determined to throw out the bill. No symptoms, however, of such infatuation appeared. So now we are nearly at the end of our labours. I must confess I am, if not quite satisfied, exceedingly well pleased. I look back to the letter which you and I wrote to Lord Bathurst in 1823, containing our demands, twelve in number. Bad as the bill is, it accomplishes every one of these, and a great deal more. Among the rest, the day is fixed after which slavery shall not be!

* * * * *

"Surely you have reason to rejoice. My sober and deliberate opinion is, that you have done more towards this consummation than any other man. For myself, I take pleasure in acknowledging that you have been my tutor all the way through, and that I could have done nothing without you. * * * This should and must cheer you. It has pleased Providence to send you sore afflictions, but hundreds of thousands of human beings will have reason here and hereafter to thank God that your zeal never slackened, and that you were enabled to labour on against difficulties and obstacles, of which no one perhaps, except myself, knew the extent; dragging to light one abomination after another, till the moral and religious feeling of the country would endure such crimes no longer. So cheer up.

"I continue very well. This session has done me less mischief than any former one. We have had something to console us, and we knew but very little of that kind of fare in former times,

"Ever yours very truly,
"T. FOWELL BUXTON."

On the 28th of August the bill for the abolition of British Slavery received the royal assent. Mr. Buxton sent a copy of it to Mr. Clarkson, with the following letter: —

"My dear Sir, "Northrepps Hall, Sept. 22. 1833.

"I cannot forward to you the enclosed Act without a line to inquire how you are, and to say how sincerely I trust you are really cheered and happy in the contemplation of the *Abolition*

of slavery! I am sure you ought to be, for you have greatly contributed towards it. I always think your pamphlet, which first gave us the *true tone*, was of most essential importance to our cause. Such as it is, it is done; and I do more and more think we ought to be very grateful and satisfied. It is a mighty experiment at best; but we must trust that it will answer to the full, and be as it were the pulling away of the corner-stone of slavery throughout the world.

"I should be delighted to hear *your* opinion of the measures.

"Yours very faithfully,

"T. F. BUXTON."

"Dear Mr. Buxton, "Playford Hall, Sept. 25. 1833.

"I received your letter the day before yesterday, and I can truly say in answer to it, that I am immeasurably, more than I can express, thankful to God for that rich display of his mercy, which at length, in his own good time, he has vouchsafed to manifest to the long-lost children of the African race. That the bill is not entirely what I wished, I have no objection to confess; but yet I am thankful, inexpressibly thankful, for it.

"I tremble to think what might have been the consequences, if you had refused the proposals of Government. What would another administration have done, had it been left to them? We may judge of this by the speeches of the Duke of Wellington last session. * * *

"Yours most truly,

"T. CLARKSON."

CHAPTER XXI.

1833, 1834.

LETTERS. — GOOD ACCOUNTS FROM THE WEST INDIES. — BARON ROTHSCHILD. — OCCUPATIONS OF THE SPRING AND SUMMER. — ENDEAVOURS FOR THE BENEFIT OF THE NEGROES. — REV. J. M. TREW. — THE DAY OF FREEDOM, AUGUST 1. 1834. — CONDUCT OF THE NEGROES. — LETTERS.

Now that slavery had fallen, Mr. Buxton looked forward with delight to the leisure which lay before him. The autumn proved, however, to be one of much sorrow. Early in September, the eldest son of Mr. Hoare, a young man of the highest promise*, began to sink under consumption; and closely as the two families were linked together, the blow which fell upon the one was felt almost as keenly by the other. It is to this event that the following letters refer: —

To Samuel Hoare, Esq.

"Northrepps Hall, Sept. 1. 1833.

"Your letter was very painful, and made us very truly and very bitterly sympathise with you. I know by sorrowful experience how much is to be endured, and how many tormenting changes there are in the disease. There is, however, one part of his case which is liable neither to anxiety nor change. He has built upon a rock. A century hence it will signify nothing whether at this time he was stronger or weaker in body; but it will then and for ever after be a matter of the greatest moment that he held a certain and just hope of eternal life through Christ.

"I had intended to have divided a great part of this day between you and myself—that is, between a review of your

* See Mr. Buxton's letter to him in 1827.

circumstances and of my own mind, which particularly wants setting to rights. It is difficult to say what I mean, so as to be understood, but I find there is such a thing as bringing the mind actually to partake of the cares and sorrows of those we love, and eating the same bread which is before them. However, my intentions were frustrated. We have had a terrible storm: three at least, I fear five or six, vessels have foundered at sea, and all hands lost. I started after church, and rode to Sheringham, by the sands, and then to Weybourne, where I found a Weymouth vessel, on shore. I saw in this excursion eleven vessels on shore, but all lives were saved. I did not get home till half-past eight o'clock. The storm is much abated now, but it has had a strange effect among the trees. It is impossible to walk about the wood at the back of the house, or down to the cottage, except in the broad daylight, so many trees are overturned. So ends this 1st of September. I have, I hope, arranged that some birds shall be slain for you to-morrow; but I must be excused at present, I am in no great mind for shooting."

To Mrs. Samuel Hoare.

"Northrepps Hall, Sept. 8. 1833.

"This has been but a low and gloomy day here, as well as at Hampstead. I think that we have felt as sorely and as much shared your sorrows, as if we had been on the spot. We have been in a state of much dejection since our return home, and very remarkable it has been. I had made up my mind for months that this was to be a first-rate holiday. I was to throw off my arms and my armour, and forget slavery, except now and then as a relish. In short, it was to be my business to be merry and happy at a great rate. The event has not been such. I have tried to shoot, but made only a poor hand of that. However, to-day I got rather near true comfort, and was able to ask, 'Why art thou cast down, O my soul, and why art thou disquieted within me? Hope thou in God!' And I do see in the event before us great stores of comfort. Nothing less than the greatest comfort would avail; for I do not disguise from myself, that, all things considered (wife, father, mother, station, prospects of usefulness), it is an affliction of no common kind. Yet dark as it is, and strongly as it proclaims that all the glory

of man is as the flower of the grass, still there is that in it which tells us to gird up the loins of our mind and rejoice and be glad. After all, in reason as well as in faith, it is no such miserable thing to be somewhat nearer than we supposed we were to that inheritance, incorruptible and undefiled, and glorious, which Christ has provided for His own. But, my dearest sister, I shall consume my paper and my time before I come to the point about which I wish to write. I hope you do not allow yourself to give way to that self-tormenting delusion of unavailing regrets and repentances, as if you had not done all that you might. I think it is a narrow view to suppose that minor matters have had any weighty influence. I believe the sickness came from the hand of God, and that he also ordained the treatment you should resort to. I believe from first to last it was His doing, and this consideration is sufficient to stifle all complaint as to the event, and all remorse as to the means. Pray do not give way to any regrets, but accept the event as wholly coming from God, and as wholly merciful, and fraught with blessings. I cannot say how deeply and tenderly I feel for each of you."

To the same.

"Oct. 6. 1833.

"* * * In my own afflictions, I have never known how to get any peace, except by taking hold implicitly of the great truths of Scripture. Is God a God of infinite mercy, not willingly afflicting us, but sending our sorrows as a precious and health-bearing medicine? I am told, and I believe it, that all which He does is done in love. Here, then, is solid comfort. Secure that our Physician knows what is best for us, and does it, a stop seems put to all idle complaints of the sharpness or bitterness of the remedy. The answer to them all is, 'It is the Lord; let Him do what seemeth him good.' It seems hardly worth while to puzzle one's self why He does so and so. He has expressly said 'What I do thou knowest not now, but thou shalt know hereafter.' There is too another way of silencing and stifling grief. The apostle gives us the argument in a perfect form. 'We faint not,' he says, 'for our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory.' There is something quite irresistible in this. The affliction, whatever it may be, and

however sad in itself, and while we limit our view to it, is in reason, as well as in faith, light as compared with the weight, short as compared with the eternity of that joy and that glory, which are prepared for the followers of Christ. Look at the things which are seen, narrow our thoughts to the pains and disappointments which unexpectedly break in upon us, and there seems no room for peace; but look at the things which are not seen, let one's mind range through a boundless eternity, remember that we have the promise of God that there we shall find that He has provided for us beyond what eye has seen or imagination conceived; and then to be over anxious as to what may befal us in the present hour, and to be diffident whether our merciful Master can and will compensate us for our present trials, seems to be want of sense and reason. * * * After all we have nothing to say, in cases of human suffering and disappointment, but one thing, but that one thing carries with it supreme and all-sufficient comfort,—namely, that Christ died for us, and hath, *actually hath*, begotten us again to a lively hope, to an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled, that fadeth not away, reserved in Heaven for you and yours."

Great anxiety now began to be felt as to the manner in which the Emancipation Act might have been received in the West Indies. The accounts of this event at length arrived, and proved to be highly satisfactory. The planters had received the new law without irritation, the negroes without excitement or insubordination, and the colonial legislatures immediately prepared to carry it into effect on the following 1st of August.

"Northrepps Hall, Dec. 29. 1833.

"In turning to my prayers for the slavery cause on last new year's day, I cannot but acknowledge that they have been most signally and surprisingly fulfilled. Thou, O Lord, hast stood forth its advocate; Thou hast controlled events, and disposed the nation to the accomplishment of liberty, and that liberty in peace; and peaceful liberty to the slave has been accompanied

by increased prosperity to the master; every word of that prayer has been accomplished, and I bless thee for thy signal bounty."

On the 17th of March Mr. Stanley gave a most satisfactory account in the House of the continued tranquillity and prosperity of the West Indies, while awaiting the day of freedom. Mr. Buxton is described as "full of joy at Mr. Stanley's speech; he says, 'I go to sleep thinking of it; I wake thinking of it.'" Some one said to him in the House in reference to Mr. Stanley's statement, "This is worth living for, and dying for." Indeed the cordial tone of his coadjutors, and of his late opponents also, was most gratifying to him.

Lord Suffield writes on this occasion:—

"My dear Buxton, "Gunton Park, March 20. 1834.

"I read Stanley's reply to your questions with infinite pleasure and thankfulness for God's blessing upon our efforts, the prosperous issue of which appears to be so far beyond all that human foresight could anticipate. The fact is we were not half so confident as we should have been in the success of a work tending in so great a degree to promote the honour and glory of God, and the temporal and eternal interests of his *coloured* creatures.

"But here *you* are more chargeable than myself; to my shame be it said, 'the honour and glory of God' made a very small part of my consideration, whereas, in yours, it was chiefly uppermost. Believe me I am duly sensible now of my unworthiness to have been made in *any degree* an humble instrument in the hands of God to accomplish so great an achievement. —You felt what you were doing throughout; you acted from the right motive, and therefore had better ground than myself for being confident of unbounded success.

"Ever truly yours,

"SUFFIELD."

To Miss Buxton at Earlham.

"54. Devonshire Street, Feb. 4. 1834.

"It is curious how many compliments we West Indian fanatics* have had on the success of our measure. I have just been in the House; and among a great variety of congratulators I saw ——, who said that nothing could be doing better; and he added, that, having lately read my speeches from the first to the last, he must confess that he was surprised to find how true and sound they had been. Stanley whispered, 'I congratulate you.' I answered, 'I congratulate *you*.'

"But I now come from the House of Lords, where Lord Grey, in reply to the Duke of Wellington, has been pronouncing a splendid eulogium on 'that beneficent measure,' as it was called in the King's Speech, 'which extirpated the worst of all human evils;' and taunting the Duke with having been a prophet of evil, whereas nothing but good has as yet resulted. I am quite pleased. This is the impression which the events of the day have made on me.

"Love to Joseph and Mary; quote to them my favourite verse:—

> 'Those are not empty-hearted, whose low sounds
> Reverb no hollowness.'†

"It applies much to my silent feelings towards them."

To Miss Buxton.

"Devonshire Street, Feb. 14. 1834.

"We yesterday dined at Ham House to meet the Rothschilds; and very amusing it was. He (Rothschild) told us his life and adventures. He was the third son of the banker at Frankfort. 'There was not,' he said, 'room enough for us all in that city. I dealt in English goods. One great trader came there who had the market to himself: he was quite the great man, and did us a favour if he sold us goods. Somehow I offended him, and he refused to show me his patterns. This was on a Tuesday; I said to my father, "I will go to England." I

* He overheard one member say to another, "So, after all, the fanatics were right!"

† King Lear.

could speak nothing but German. On the Thursday I started; the nearer I got to England, the cheaper goods were. As soon as I got to Manchester, I laid out all my money, things were so cheap; and I made good profit. I soon found that there were three profits—the raw material, the dyeing, and the manufacturing. I said to the manufacturer, "I will supply you with material and dye, and you supply me with manufactured goods." So I got three profits instead of one, and I could sell goods cheaper than anybody. In a short time I made my 20,000*l.* into 60,000*l.* My success all turned on one maxim. I said, I can do what another man can, and so I am a match for the man with the patterns, and for all the rest of them! Another advantage I had. I was an off-hand man. I made a bargain at once. When I was settled in London, the East India Company had 800,000*l.* worth of gold to sell. I went to the sale, and bought it all. I knew the Duke of Wellington must have it. I had bought a great many of his bills at a discount. The Government sent for me, and said they must have it. When they had got it, they did not know how to get it to Portugal. I undertook all that, and I sent it through France, and that was the best business I ever did.'

"Another maxim, on which he seemed to place great reliance, was never to have anything to do with an unlucky place or an unlucky man. 'I have seen,' said he, 'many clever men, very clever men, who had not shoes to their feet. I never act with them. Their advice sounds very well, but fate is against them; they cannot get on themselves; and if they cannot do good to themselves, how can they do good to me?' By aid of these maxims he has acquired three millions of money.

"'I hope, said ——, 'that your children are not too fond of money and business, to the exclusion of more important things. I am sure you would not wish that.' Rothschild.—'I am sure I should wish that. I wish them to give mind, and soul, and heart, and body and everything to business: that is the way to be happy. It requires a great deal of boldness and a great deal of caution to make a great fortune; and when you have got it, it requires ten times as much wit to keep it. If I were to listen to all the projects proposed to me, I should ruin myself very soon. Stick to one business, young man,' said he to Edward; 'stick to your brewery, and you may be the great brewer of

London. Be a brewer, and a banker, and a merchant, and a manufacturer, and you will soon be in the Gazette. * * * One of my neighbours is a very ill-tempered man; he tries to vex me, and has built a great place for swine, close to my walk. So, when I go out, I hear first grunt, grunt, squeak, squeak; but this does me no harm. I am always in good humour. Sometimes, to amuse myself, I give a beggar a guinea. He thinks it is a mistake, and for fear I should find it out, off he runs as hard as he can. I advise you to give a beggar a guinea sometimes; it is very amusing.'

"The daughters are very pleasing. The second son is a mighty hunter; and his father lets him buy any horses he likes. He lately applied to the emperor of Morocco for a first-rate Arab horse. The emperor sent him a magnificent one, but he died as he landed in England. The poor youth said very feelingly, 'that was the greatest misfortune he ever had suffered;' and I felt strong sympathy with him. I forgot to say, that soon after M. Rothschild came to England, Bonaparte invaded Germany; 'The Prince of Hesse Cassel,' said Rothschild, 'gave my father his money; there was no time to be lost; he sent it to me. I had 600,000*l.* arrive unexpectedly by the post; and I put it to such good use, that the prince made me a present of all his wine and his linen.'"

During the Easter recess Mr. Buxton thus writes from Northrepps Cottage: —

"March 27. 1834.

"Now for a history of my day. After a cheerful breakfast I lounged with a book to the Hall. It looks brighter than I expected; the day so fine, the flowers so abundant, and the birds so happy. I am going to sell my sheep, so there is the end of that sagacious speculation. Anna Gurney called for me there and took me first to Mr. Law's, where I saw a great craniologist, who spent an hour over my head, and told me strange news of myself; some hitting the mark, and others far away from it.

"Then we drove to Trimingham, where we looked at fossils, and at the calm sea, and the land which I am to have for shooting. We got home about 2 o'clock, and she read to me till our quiet lively dinner; everything vastly agreeable. Moscow*

* A favourite Newfoundland dog.

was allowed to come in and dine with us. After dinner, reading and a trifle of sleep, and so on, till now. The only take off is, that I am quite out of my element, hardly knowing what to do in the country at this time of year."

"April 18. 1834.

"My birthday is just passed: though I did not minute down my thoughts, it did not pass unheeded. How had I to exult and to thank my God for His mercy with regard to the slave question! On the 17th of March, Stanley, in answer to a question from me, gave a most highly encouraging account of what was going on in the West Indies;—the whip abolished, the negroes more industrious, no disturbance, no murmur, no ruin to the planter.

"Three years ago who dreamt of such a termination? What would I have given to secure such good tidings, even one year ago, on the 19th of March, the day of my motion! Do I say more than the truth, when I say I would have given my life?

"Blessed be God, for ever blessed, for this singular mercy!

* * * * *

"I have now been walking in the garden, and having an hour of earnest prayer. I was much affected by looking at the expanse of the skies—the moon—the masses of cloud. They gave me a more realising view of Him who created them all, that wonderful Being, so great as to govern the universe, so merciful as to regard such a worm as I am, and to bear with my transgressions.

"Oh! that I might always carry with me the same awful sense of His presence, and such a realisation of His majesty and of His goodness!"

Neither in public nor in private did he forget to give God the glory of the success that was obtained. At a meeting of the London Missionary Society, May 15th, after alluding to Mr. Wilberforce and Mr. Macaulay, he said:

"But let it not be supposed that we give the praise of the abolition of slavery to Mr. Wilberforce, or to Mr. Macaulay, or to any man. I know the obligations we owe them; but the voice of the Christian people of England was the *instrument* of

victory. Its *Author*, however, was not of human race; but, infinite in power, what His mercy decreed, His fiat effected."

The spring and summer of 1834 were spent chiefly in active exertions for the benefit of those so soon to be liberated, watching the regulations adopted in the different islands; carefully investigating the appointment of the stipendiary magistrates; and especially endeavouring to provide for the education and religious instruction of the negroes. He was in constant communication on this subject with Mr. Stanley, and corresponded largely with the secretaries of various benevolent societies, trying to stir up their zeal on behalf of the newly emancipated blacks. A noble example was set by the British and Foreign Bible Society, which promised a New Testament and Psalter to every negro who should be found able to read on the Christmas-day after emancipation.

Amongst other schemes there was one of great importance, which at length succeeded. Some years before this time, Mr. Buxton had received information that a certain Lady Mico, who died in 1710, had left a sum of money to her daughter on condition of her not marrying a specified individual, in which case it was to be devoted to the redemption of white slaves in Barbary. The daughter married and lost the money, which accumulated till, in 1827 (when no Christian slaves remained in Barbary), it amounted to more than 110,000*l*. "This sum," wrote Mr. Buxton to Mr. Macaulay, from Cromer, "Lushington thinks we shall be able to get applied in the right way, *if you come by the Holt coach on Saturday*, — William Smith comes on Friday. I will send for you to Holt on Saturday night."

At length, after much expense and trouble, the money was obtained, and invested in the names of Dr.

Lushington, Mr. Buxton, and two other trustees, to be employed in the education of the negroes. To the interest of this sum the Government added a temporary grant of 20,000*l.* per annum; and the proper and most efficient application of this money occupied much of Mr. Buxton's time and attention. He, as well as the other trustees, spared no labour in the endeavour to establish schools, and to procure schoolmasters of ability and piety. Their chief agent was the Rev. J. M. Trew (now Archdeacon of the Bahamas), who had won Mr. Buxton's highest esteem by the sacrifices and efforts he had made on behalf of the negroes, during a long residence in Jamaica.

The following interesting memoranda, in connection with the subject, were preserved by Mr. Trew.

"The letter in which Mr. Buxton announced my appointment said, 'I have named you to the trustees for this important work. They are abundantly satisfied; and if you are prepared to carry out their views upon a liberal and comprehensive basis you will proceed immediately to London.' Immediately on my arrival in town, I called upon Mr. Buxton, and said to him, 'I do not quite understand what is to be the basis of your system, or what is meant by your "liberal and comprehensive principles."' 'What is your own view of the case?' was the rejoinder. 'My view of the case,' said I, 'is simply this: I take the whole word of God to be the only right basis upon which a Christian education can rest; will you concede this?' 'Granted,' he replied; 'and let me assure you, that upon no other principles would I have anything to do with this charity.' Upon those principles he commenced, and by those principles he and his co-trustees ever after continued to be governed. Having been deputed by his colleagues to examine the teachers when selected by their agent, preparatory to their embarkation for the West Indies, it was delightful to witness the condescension and tenderness with which he was accustomed to address them. He had a word of kindness and of encouragement for each. To one he would say, as he reached forth his hand to bid him farewell, 'Well!

you are going upon an arduous work; but it is a noble undertaking. I hope that you may do well, and that God may bless you.' To another, 'Write to us often, we are deeply interested in your welfare; you have the prayers of many for your success.' He used to remark, 'I like to know these men, that I may identify each with his peculiar sphere of labour.' And if he thus desired to know them, truly it may be said that his affectionate parting remembrance was never forgotten by any of them. They honoured him, and they loved him.

"Never shall I forget the effect which his manner and address produced upon some young men who were shortly afterwards to proceed to the West Indies. On the occasion referred to, Mr. Buxton, having been detained beyond his appointed hour, owing to his having been at Court, came direct from the palace before he changed his dress. The schoolmasters in waiting, who were simple men, chiefly from Scotland and Ireland, not one of whom had ever been in London before, were much struck by his appearance; but when, as they were severally introduced, he took them kindly by the hand and conversed with each, as one interested in their respective prospects and welfare, they were astonished beyond measure, and went forth to their labours, assured that they had in him a sympathising Christian friend; and many indeed were the opportunities which subsequently presented themselves, whereby he proved that his feelings of interest in their welfare were not evanescent, but the result of Christian principle, operating upon a naturally amiable and generous heart.

"In those islands for which comparatively little had been done previously to the period of their emancipation, as in Trinidad, St. Lucia, Mauritius, Seychelles, &c., he took the most lively interest, always maintaining the principle, and acting on it also, that the training of native agents was essential to a general diffusion of knowledge amongst the islanders. With a view to this, he advocated the establishment of normal schools in the most important of our colonies; and he had the happiness of living to know that so successful were the operations of the Board of Trustees, that, under the blessing of God, upwards of 500 teachers were trained in these model seminaries; and that, too, for every denomination of Christian Missionaries."

The first of August, 1834, the day on which the emancipation of the slaves was to take place, was drawing near; an address, written by Mr. Buxton in the name of the Anti-slavery Society, forcibly shows what were his feelings on the occasion: —

"Surely a day of such vast moment to the welfare of one part of the empire, and to the honour of the whole, ought not to pass unnoticed. * * * It is a day for undoing the heavy burdens and letting the oppressed go free; and the true celebration of such an event is in hearty and united thanksgiving to God for this marvellous achievement, and prayer that He will bless the work, bless the givers, bless the receivers, and make it a source of blessing to the oppressed and afflicted throughout the world. * * * Some may think that this great work was accomplished by the act of man; some will ascribe it to one body, and some to another; but we trust that our friends, now that the conflict of party has ceased, and the cloud raised around us by the passions of man has been dispersed, will unite in acknowledging the signal providence of Almighty God, who has, from the beginning to the end, been the true doer of the glorious work; originating it in the hearts of its advocates; lifting it over the all but insurmountable obstacles of its early day; setting at nought the counsels alike of friends and foes; providing means, providing instruments, unexpected, diverse, conflicting; yet, under the skilful guidance of the Divine hand, all urging forward the same conclusion; and from the chaos of confusion, from the battle of irreconcileable opinions, bringing us to the scarcely credible consummation of emancipation in peace, in harmony, in safety, in congratulation and acquiescence on all sides."

Five days before the first of August, he thus refers to it in his book of meditations: —

"July 27. Sunday.

"On Friday next slavery is to cease throughout the British colonies! I wished, therefore, to have a season of deep retirement of soul, of earnest prayer, and of close communion with my God, and, for this purpose, I went to a Friends' meeting. I began with earnest prayer for the influence of the Holy Spirit that he should take the helm in all our doings, and navigate us in

peace and safety throughout our whole voyage. Then, in deep humiliation, in a sense of my own great guilt and ingratitude, I made confession of such sins as occurred to me, and pleaded hard with God, for Christ's sake, 'in whom we have redemption through His blood; even the forgiveness of sins.' This prayer was offered in some trouble of soul, and in a full sense that every other cord was broken, and that the only cable by which I could hold on was forgiveness through Christ. Then I returned thanks — I was sensibly affected with a view of God's dealings with me. Each one knows the history of himself, and many things are known to him which are concealed from others—perhaps, therefore, others could recount similar experience, but to me it appears that there has been a strange and peculiar guidance over me; and that God, designing to commit to me in his goodness some share in the emancipation of the negroes, had originated contrivances, and ordered events, singularly suitable for such a result. Then I prayed for the outpouring of the Holy Spirit on those 700,000 oppressed and persecuted children of our common Father who will be liberated on that day. O thou who hast been indeed their merciful Deliverer, who, for the oppression of the poor and the sighing of the needy, hast arisen and set them in safety; add, we beseech thee, to all thy benefits, by such an effusion and outpouring of thy Spirit, as shall make them a people peculiarly obedient to thy commandments, and peculiarly visited by thy presence, and that, as by thy goodness they are changed from slaves to freemen, they may also be transformed from heathens into Christians; in deed, in spirit, and in truth.

"And now I commend next Friday to thee, my merciful God. May it be a happy day, and the harbinger of many, many happy days, to one very, very dear to me, and to multitudes for whom I have been favoured long to labour!"

The anxiously expected first of August at length arrived. It was kept very generally throughout England as a day of rejoicing. To Mr. Buxton it was rendered memorable, not only by the consummation of that great work to which his heart had so ardently been given, but also because on this day his eldest daughter was

married to Mr. Andrew Johnston, of Renny Hill in Fifeshire, M.P. for St. Andrew's. He thus alluded to the circumstance, in a letter to the Rev. Dr. Philip of Cape Town: "I surrendered my vocation, and next to Macaulay, my best human helper in it, on the same day; and I am not only well contented, but very happy, and very thankful that she is so bestowed."

A large circle of his connections assembled at his house on the occasion, and expressed the lively interest with which they had sympathised in his public labours, by presenting him with two handsome pieces of plate, in commemoration of the emancipation of the slaves.

It was indeed a day which called forth the expression of his deepest feelings of thankfulness, and of his most earnest desires for blessings on those near and afar off, to whom the day was one of such signal importance.

"Never had we," he said, "such a call for thanksgiving, never such occasion to pray for a blessing, as upon the work of this day. It is demonstration to our understandings, it is vision to our minds, that God has done it. We had no might, neither knew we what to do. The battle was not ours but God's. The Lord has been with us."

To Mrs. Upcher.

"My dear Friend, "August 1. 1834, four o'clock.

"The bride is just off. Everything has passed off to admiration, and there is not a slave in the British colonies!"

"Mark the seal, 'Safe and satisfactory.'"

In the evening the leading Abolitionists dined together at the Freemasons' Tavern; the Earl of Mulgrave, the late Governor of Jamaica, in the chair.

But many of those who shared in the festivities of the day could not divest themselves of a feeling of uneasiness when they thought of what might, at that very time, be passing in the West Indies. The period that intervened

between August, 1833, when Mr. Stanley's measure became law, and August 1. 1834, when it was to take effect, had indeed passed away in unexampled tranquillity. But would not the gloomy predictions of the West Indians be now fulfilled? The bloodshed, the rioting, the drunkenness, and confusion they had so often foretold—would not these tarnish the lustre of this glorious deed of the British people?

It was, therefore, with feelings of deep solicitude, that Mr. Buxton and his friends awaited the news from the colonies. He was at Northrepps Hall, when, on the 10th of September, a large pile of letters came in with the colonial stamps upon them. Well knowing that they would contain the long-looked-for intelligence, he took them, still sealed, in his hand, and walked out into the wood; desiring no witness but One of the emotion and anxiety he experienced. He opened them: and deep indeed was his joy and gratitude to God, when he found that one letter after another was filled with accounts of the admirable conduct of the negroes on the great day of freedom. Throughout the colonies the churches and chapels had been thrown open, and the slaves had crowded into them, on the evening of the 31st of July. As the hour of midnight approached, they fell upon their knees, and awaited the solemn moment, all hushed in silent prayer. When twelve sounded from the chapel bells they sprang upon their feet, and through every island rang the glad sound of thanksgiving to the Father of all, for the chains were broken, and the slaves were free.*

* Amongst the many beautiful verses which the occasion called forth, the following, by Mr. James Montgomery, stand pre-eminent:—

"Hie to the mountains afar,
All in the cool of the even,
Led by yon beautiful star,
First of the daughters of heaven:

To the Right Rev. Daniel Wilson, Lord Bishop of Calcutta.

"My dear Friend, "Cromer, Oct. 21. 1834.

"How long have I neglected to write to you, and how often have I reproached myself for it! My only excuse for it is, that Andrew Johnston, M. P. (who breakfasted at your house, just before your departure), has run away with my secretary, Priscilla. They were married on the 1st of August,—the day on which, says the Act of Parliament, 'Slavery shall cease and be unlawful in the British colonies, plantations, and possessions.' I know you heartily rejoiced at this termination of our labours; for I remember with gratitude, that you were ever steadfast and faithful to that good cause. We have now accounts from the West Indies of the way in which the 1st of August was passed; and highly satisfactory they are.

Sweet to the slave is the season of rest:
Something far sweeter he looks for to-night,
His heart lies awake in the depth of his breast,
And listens till God shall say, 'Let there be light!'

"Climb we the mountain, and stand
High in mid air, to inhale,
Fresh from our old father-land
Balm in the ocean-borne gale.
Darkness yet covers the face of the deep:
Spirit of freedom! go forth in thy might,
To break up our bondage, like infancy's sleep,
The moment when God shall say, 'Let there be light!'

"Gaze we awhile from this peak,
Praying in thought while we gaze;
Watch for the dawning's first streak,—
Prayer then be turned into praise.
Shout to the valleys 'Behold ye the morn,
Long, long desired, but denied to our sight!'
Lo! myriads of slaves into men are new-born,
The word was omnipotent—'Let there be light!'

"Hear it, and hail it;—the call
Island to island prolong;—
Liberty! liberty! all
Join in that jubilee song.
Hark, 'tis the children's hosannahs that ring!
Hark, they are freemen, whose voices unite!
While England, the Indies, and Africa sing,
'Amen! hallelujah!' to 'Let there be light!'"

"The apprenticeship seems to go down with the negroes. This is wonderful to me; for I cannot reconcile it even now to my reason that this system should flourish. In Antigua the legislature wisely dispensed with the apprenticeship, and from thence we have most encouraging reports.

"A letter, dated the 2nd August, says, 'The day of wonders —of anticipated confusion, riot, and bloodshed—has passed by, and all is peace and order.' On Monday the negroes all returned to work. Now this quite amuses, as well as pleases me. During four days' examination before the Lords, they asked me, among a thousand strange questions, 'If emancipation were to take place to-day, what would the negroes do to-morrow?' I replied, 'To-morrow they would, I think, take a holiday; so they would on Saturday; on Monday I expect they would go to work, if you paid them for it!'

"Another letter, dated the 4th, says:—'Yesterday I was round the island, and did not hear of a single improper act, not even of a man being intoxicated. Our chapels were crowded to suffocation.' And not only from Antigua, but from every other quarter, we hear that almost the whole population attended chapel or church on the day of their liberation."

To Mrs. Buxton.

"Bellfield, Nov. 23. 1834.

"I could not get a place in the Dorchester Mail, so I took my place to Salisbury in another. Soon after I was seated, the Bishop of Barbadoes got in, and a great deal of very interesting conversation we had. He has received letters from many parts of his diocese, giving the most encouraging accounts. At Antigua seven important results have followed emancipation:—

"First: Wives and husbands hitherto living on different estates began to live together.

"Second: The number of marriages greatly increased. One of his clergy had married ten couple a week since the 1st of August.

"Third: The schools greatly increased; a hundred children were added in one district.

"Fourth: The planters complain that their whole weeding gang, instead of going to work, go to school.

"Fifth: All the young women cease to work in the fields, and are learning female employments.

"Sixth: Friendly societies for mutual relief have increased.

"Seventh: The work of the clergymen is doubled. One of the chapels which held 300 is being enlarged, so as to contain 900, and will not be large enough.

"The utmost desire is felt by the negroes for religious instruction, and their children are in every way as quick in learning as the whites. The most intelligent and influential of the Antigua planters tells him that the experiment is answering to his entire satisfaction. It will require some time, he says, for the planters to overcome their prejudices against machinery. He has not heard of an act of violence anywhere. The negroes are a very affectionate and docile race. He has seventy-seven clergymen in his diocese, and most of them zealous good men. Twenty young men have been educated at Codrington College for the church; and some of them, who are already ordained, are excellent ministers.

"But now about my journey. When we got to Salisbury the Bishop and I posted on together. I dressed and breakfasted at Dorchester, and went on very cheerfully. As soon as I got to Weymouth I collected some of the best of my party, and got them to advise me to do the things which I had resolved to do, viz. to canvass immediately, and to abstain from anything like treating or giving beer.

"I said publicly, and said truly, that if my election depended on a single vote, and that vote was to be sold for sixpence, I would not give it."

"Northrepps, Dec. 28. 1834.

"On February 3. 1833, I prayed that thou, O Lord, wouldst rise up as the Advocate of the oppressed, disposing all hearts, and moulding all events, to the accomplishment of liberty, and that liberty in peace: protecting their masters from ruin and desolation.—Thou didst rise up! It is said in the Psalms, that 'the nations shall see that it was thy doing,' and how manifest was thy instrumentality! Who raised up the population of England to demand as one man the liberation of the negro? Who overruled that convincing warning, the insurrection in Jamaica, to prove to a hesitating Government that the crisis would brook no delay? Who, contrary to our wishes, caused

the formation of those Parliamentary committees which, designed and demanded by the enemy, ended in their discomfiture? Who sent witnesses at the very crisis in which they were needed; carrying conviction to the minds of many of our antagonists, that slavery must be abolished? Who prevailed on a money-loving people freely to sacrifice twenty millions of money? Who thus delivered the masters from ruin and desolation? Who moulded the hearts of the negroes, so that their first act was universally crowding to the chapels, to return thanks to thee; then of their own accord abolishing Sunday markets, and abstaining from any instance of intoxication? and who enabled the Governor to report that 'no act of violence on the part of the negroes had occurred?'

"In each of these events, and in numberless others, it were blindness not to perceive the guidance of a more than human hand.

"Let me entreat thee, O merciful Father, to go with me, to guide me, and guard me, and prosper my ways. Oh! the comforting plainness of that promise, 'If any man lack wisdom, let him ask of God, and it shall be given him.'"

CHAPTER XXII.

1834, 1835.

INQUIRY INTO THE TREATMENT OF ABORIGINAL TRIBES IN BRITISH COLONIES. — ADDRESS TO THE KING ON THE SUBJECT. — CAFFRE WAR. — ABORIGINES' COMMITTEE. — LETTERS. — LORD GLENELG'S DESPATCH. — VISIT FROM A CAFFRE CHIEF. — MR. BUXTON TURNS TO THE SUBJECT OF THE SLAVE TRADE OF FOREIGN NATIONS. — AN ADDRESS TO THE KING AGREED TO.

ALTHOUGH the summer of 1834 was mainly occupied by Mr. Buxton in endeavours to complete the great work of emancipation, yet his mind was much occupied by a new undertaking, which, however, was in many respects similar to that upon which he had been engaged.

This was an inquiry into the condition and treatment of the aboriginal inhabitants of our colonies; a subject peculiarly calculated to arouse his interest, and, indeed, to excite his indignation. "I protest," he said, "I hate shooting innocent savages worse than slavery itself."

He thus concludes a long paper of meditations, dated January, 1834: —

"Though I practise not, I see what a noble course there is opened for me; and if I have a desire, it is that by the instrumentality of thy grace, O Lord, thou wouldst mould me into a man who is altogether thy servant, in temper, in objects of pursuit, in labours, in meekness, in charity, in faith, in godliness, in prayer, and in practice, directing my steps heavenward.

"My attention has been drawn of late to the wickedness of our proceedings as a nation, towards the ignorant and barbarous natives of countries on which we seize. What have we Christians done for them? We have usurped their lands, kidnapped,

enslaved, and murdered themselves. The greatest of their crimes is, that they sometimes trespass into the lands of their forefathers; and the very greatest of their misfortunes is that they have ever become acquainted with Christians. Shame on such Christianity! My object is to inquire into past proceedings, for the purpose of instituting certain rules and laws, on principles of justice, for the future treatment of the aborigines of those countries where we make settlements.

"O thou God of mercy and justice, who hast supported me and strengthened me in the ten years' combat for the deliverance of the negro, be thou my guide and guardian in this effort. Let it be conducted under the direction of thy good Spirit. Let prayer be made for its good issue. Give us wisdom and resolution. Move the hearts of those who have power, and the hearts of all thy righteous people in this land, to come to our help. Purify the motives from which we act: let no unworthy desire of praise spring up; but let this good cause begin in a hearty desire to serve thee. Let it be conducted under the guidance of thy wisdom, and under the succour of thy strength. And let it terminate in the entrance of millions of our fellowmen, now barbarous, ignorant, and heathen, into thy Church; let innocent commerce, civilisation, knowledge, and that which is better than all, true faith in Christ, be extended to the barbarous nations, to whom we are as yet known only by our power and our cruelty.

"O God, for the sake of Him who healed the sick, comforted the sorrowful, instructed the ignorant, and shed abroad that light and that influence to which we owe all our present enjoyments, and on which all our future hopes are built, for His sake hear and answer these prayers."

To the Rev. Dr. Philip, at Cape Town.

"January 17. 1834.

"It appears to me that we ought to fix and enforce certain regulations and laws, with regard to the natives of all countries where we make settlements. Those laws must be based on the principles of justice. In order to do justice we must admit—

"1st. That the natives have a right to their own lands.

"2ndly. That as our settlements must be attended with some evils to them, it is our duty to give them compensation for those

evils, by imparting the truths of Christianity and the arts of civilised life.

"Having agreed on the points to be aimed at, our next business is to ascertain in what degree we have acted, and now act, in violation of justice and humanity towards the natives—what encroachments we have made on their property—what moral and physical evils we have introduced. Next, as to the reparation of these oppressions. Have we done our best, or have we done anything, for the purpose of improving their condition and making them Christians? or have we resisted both the one and the other, and done our best to retain them in a condition of debasement and depravity? And, finally, how must we now retrace our steps? and what are the most judicious modes of securing to them some portion of their own land, and giving them an equivalent for their losses and sufferings, by making efforts for their civilisation and conversion to Christianity?"

On the 1st of July, 1834, he moved an address to the King on the subject. In his speech on this occasion he dwelt upon the grievances of the commando system in South Africa. These commandos greatly resembled the border forays of the fifteenth century. On some plea of cattle having been stolen, the colonists used to arm and make inroads into Caffreland; and after despoiling the lands of the barbarians, they would march home in triumph, usually with large booty. Thus in a single year, (1819) as many as 52,000 head of cattle were taken from the natives; and this system of spoliation was continued, till the colonists became persuaded that nothing could secure their own existence, but the annihilation of their irritated foes.*

* The following is an extract from a description, given by an eye-witness, of a commando sent out from the Cape in 1830. (See Evidence before Parliamentary Committee, 1835.)—"The military were divided into three or four parties. * * * We were only aware of the presence of the other parties in the country by the smoke of the burning villages. One Caffre shouted to us across a ravine, to ask why we were burning his cottage; it seemed difficult to make a reply; there was silence throughout the party!"

The address, having been seconded by Mr. Spring Rice (the Colonial Secretary), was passed unanimously. It prayed His Majesty that he would be graciously pleased to take such measures as should secure to the natives the due observance of justice and the protection of their rights, promote the spread of civilisation among them, and lead them to the peaceful and voluntary reception of the Christian religion.

To the Rev. Dr. Philip, at Cape Town.

"Sept. 30. 1834.

"I have received and heartily thank you for your long letter, dated May 6th. Pray keep me well informed.

"I have also received the letters and newspapers about the attempted renewal of the Vagrant Act.* I think it will come to nothing, but if so, your prompt interposition prevented it. I wrote a very strong letter to Spring Rice, our Colonial Secretary and my old friend and coadjutor on Mauritius and slavery matters. Power would make great changes indeed if it were to give *him* any fellowship in feeling with West India planters or your boors.

"I have also received your note about the commando system. Upon that I feel most deeply interested: furnish me with facts; give me facts about commandos, and I will, if alive and in Parliament, aim an effectual blow at them. I stay in Parliament very much against my inclination, for no other purpose except to watch the West Indies and to protect the aborigines,—chiefly the latter. Did you ever read Wordsworth's 'Life of Baxter'? Baxter says, 'There is nothing in the world which lieth so heavy upon my heart as the thought of the miserable nations of the earth. I cannot be affected so much with the calamities of my own relations, or the land of my nativity, as with the case of the heathen, Mahometan, and ignorant nations of the earth. No part of my prayers is so deeply serious as that for the con-

* This vagrancy act was an ingenious contrivance of some of the colonists to reduce the Hottentots once more to slavery; but it was prevented from becoming law by Mr Spring Rice.

version of the infidel and ungodly world.' I feel, in my poor way, somewhat of the same kind, and desire and pray that my heart may be turned, and my exertions directed, to the spread of peace, and justice, and knowledge, and Christianity among them. I think England is a deep offender in the sight of God, for the enormities she permits to be practised upon these poor, ignorant, defenceless creatures; and with God's help, I hope to do something for them yet. I have read with great interest your letter to America. In one respect you are in error; you praise the American Colonisation Society. It is nothing else than an artifice of the slave owners, who wish to divert public attention from the question of slavery, and to get rid of the people of colour. They pass the most furious and bigoted laws against them. For example, they make it death for the second offence of teaching negroes and people of colour to read: and thus forcing the people of colour to quit America, they are pleased to set up for philanthropists in Africa. With this exception, I was highly gratified by your letter. There is one question which I beg you to consider. What are the measures which I should aim at for the benefit of countries where we make settlements? I have thought of a protector, through whom all bargains shall be made, that they may not be cheated out of their land; and secondly, that as inevitably we must do them much injury by spreading our diseases, and our brandy, and our gunpowder among them, we ought to make them compensation by measures for the diffusion of Christianity. What more shall I aim at? You know I look to you as my chief informant and adviser, so pray help me. Let me have every species of information about the Kat River Settlement. How does 'Buxton' get on? I am now going to a Bible Society Meeting in the neighbourhood, where I shall make a speech out of your letters and the Kat River; they do me frequent and good service at Bible and Missionary Meetings."

To Mrs. Buxton.

"Bradpole, Jan. 4. 1835.

"How sincerely sorry I am when I think that it is but too probable that you are at this very time suffering from another attack of those dear eyes! How very very glad I shall be if I get to-morrow an improved account!

"Now for election matters. — Bankes has resigned. There never was any thing like the infatuation of these people. At this moment I am safe, but we must not be too confident. Every body is mad, and there is no telling what they may do in their frenzy. * * * On Wednesday is the nomination. I shall make a speech and tell them my opinions without reserve, and those opinions will not be gratifying either to Tories or Radicals.

"I came over here yesterday, and have enjoyed much the silence, the divine silence, of the country. I am now going to meeting with William; and to-morrow morning I return to Weymouth."

At the commencement of 1835 he thus refers in his commonplace book to the coming year: —

"I shall devote myself to the three great subjects now on my hands.

"1st. The completion of emancipation; for much remains to be done.

"2nd. The abolition of the Spanish and Portuguese slave trade.

"3rd. The just treatment of the aborigines.

"Then (if I am to have these honourable duties, and shall be enabled to fulfil them) I desire and pray that I may be returned at the approaching election; but if, O Lord, thine eye perceives that I shall be turned away from the path of duty, that I shall pursue my own pleasure or aggrandisement in preference to thy service, then I heartily pray thee to avert from me the temptation. But in all acts, in all counsels, be with me, and teach me what I shall do and say for Christ's sake."

"Northrepps Hall, Jan. 18. 1835.

"Late yesterday evening I returned to this sweet home, having, for the seventh time, been elected, and having had my prayers answered. I have been, I thankfully acknowledge, guided and directed. May it please thee, thou prayer-hearing God, to make my being in Parliament conducive to the spread of thy name among the heathen, and to the interests of humanity, justice, freedom, and real religion.

"My mind has been a good deal occupied of late with deep and powerful impressions of the shortness of the time which remains for me on earth, and with the irresistible reasons for dedicating it to God, and through his grace to the salvation of my own soul. Oh, my God, now give me the spirit of wisdom, that, the eyes of my understanding being enlightened, I may know the riches and the glory of thy inheritance. Is it prudent, is it the part of true wisdom, to employ this small remnant of time in the pursuit of pleasure, or honour, or wealth?

"If these things could certainly be acquired, and if certainly they would last for ever, the tempter might have some colour of reason wherewith to seduce my mind to the belief that they were really objects worthy of my affections. But when there is a certainty, not of their continuance but of their speedy flight, every reason and argument is marshalled on the side of dedication of heart to pleasures, glories, riches, which shall endure for ever.

"With the conviction then that I stand almost on the verge of eternity; that the days cannot be many before the secret and awful things of futurity shall be unveiled to me; that ere long I must be an inhabitant of the world of spirits, and that then my eyes will assuredly see that Christ, whose name I bear, royally attended with an innumerable company of angels descending from heaven to judge me and all mankind, and that then my ears will hear that sound of the trumpet which shall summon all flesh before His presence, and that on me must be pronounced that irrevocable sentence — 'Come you blessed,' or 'Depart you cursed ——.'

"Seeing then that those earthly things must be dissolved, what manner of person ought I to be? Thou good and gracious Spirit, teach me this; thou blessed Lord, who instructs the ignorant and succours the weak, do thou, in compassion to a soul very ignorant and desperately weak, but nevertheless with some desires after a higher and holier walk than heretofore, do thou in mercy be my guide and teacher.

"Let me then picture the character I ought to be—a Christian in faith. This is, beyond doubt, the great point to be obtained. * * * What then are the acts which correspond with a true and sound faith?

"The habit of prayer.

"The habit of watching the mercies of God, and solemnly

returning thanks for them. I am sometimes inclined to think that I have been peculiarly the child of Providence. At all events, how much have I to be thankful for, and how poor and dull is my abiding sense of gratitude!

"There is something very alarming in the question,—'Were there not ten cleansed, but where are the nine?' Oh, may I not be of the number who 'returned not to give glory to God!'

"The habit of kindness, courtesy, tender-heartedness—how much does this appear the spirit which is congenial to Christianity, and which grows and flourishes in a Christian heart! How often is it inculcated! How high is the standard placed before us, forbearing one another and forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you!

"The habit of doing and seeking to do all the good in my power. God has given me a portion of property, station, reputation, intellectual energy. Such as they are, God gave them, and to His service must the influence they give be dedicated.

"The habit of dedicating the Sabbath to its peculiar duties, not wasting its precious hours, not worshipping God with a wandering and unsteady mind, not stealing its moments for secular purposes.

"The habit of calling myself to account for the use I make of my money, my time, my powers. * * * On Wednesday next I go to attend my duties in Parliament—what are my prayers? I have now been wandering about the garden; my last Sabbath's walk this season, it may be the last I shall ever take, and I have been pouring forth my heart in prayer. I have prayed for myself, and my prayer is that thou, O Lord, wouldst enable me to give thee my heart. Constrain me to dedicate myself, body, mind, and soul, fortune, talents, influence, and energy, to thy service, and this without reserve. If I am convinced in sober judgment that nothing can be so wise, so right, and so happy, as this surrender of myself to thee, enable me to act in all things as one who is resolved to make that my one absorbing aim; and as without Christ I can do nothing, do thou work this change in my heart. Do thou fortify my resolutions, and do thou give me the ability to offer this willing and reasonable sacrifice. As to all my affairs, public and private, I ask of thee the fulfilment of this rich promise;—'I will instruct thee and

teach thee in the way which thou shalt go, I will guide thee with mine eye.'

"Let this guidance be with me especially in my Parliamentary duties; in the cause of the natives, in the slave trade, in the religious instruction of the negroes, in dealing with the Church.

"In these great questions do thou be my teacher, and make me to attend rather to the small voice behind me, saying, 'This is the way, walk thou in it,' than to the bias of party or the desire of favour in the eyes of man.

"O Lord, be with the rulers of the nation, making them to do that which shall conduce to the peace and welfare of the nation, and to thy glory.

"Be with the emancipated negroes in our colonies, pour out upon their ministers and upon them that living water which is better than liberty or wealth.

"Oh, my God, hear and answer these prayers, for Christ's sake."

At the election of January 1835 he stated to his constituents that his labours should be devoted to the objects above mentioned; and in fact they formed his principal occupation throughout the year. The grievous accounts of the Caffre war turned his attention more especially to the state of the natives in the colonies. The depredations of the Caffres had led to severe retaliations on the part of the colonists, which ended in open war and the complete overthrow of the Caffres.

In a despatch to Lord Glenelg, who had succeeded Mr. Spring Rice, Sir Benjamin D'Urban announces that —

"4000 Caffre warriors have been slaughtered; 60,000 head of cattle and almost all their goats captured; their country (now called the Adelaide territory) is taken from them; their habitations are every where destroyed, and their gardens and corn-fields laid waste."*

Mr. Buxton obtained a Parliamentary committee to

* November, 1835.

inquire into this war, as well as into the general treatment of the aboriginal nations bordering on our settlements.

To Mrs. Buxton.

"London, Aug. 8.

"I went yesterday into the city to the Alliance, to the Anti-slavery Society, to the Aborigines' Committee, and to a meeting at Lushington's about the Mauritius. The variety and interest of these subjects, especially the two last, animated me.

"We had a pleasant journey down to Coggeshall, where Edward, Edmund, Abraham Plastow, and myself took a walk of an hour and a half, and very interesting it was to me and Abraham recounting old events. It is strange that, having hardly been at Coggeshall since I was a boy, of all the numbers of persons associated in my recollection only my uncle and Abraham remained as my seniors. I was all but the oldest of the party. Abraham, in whom I could remember nothing but that he was my tutor, was a little more reverential than suited my recollections; but I was greatly pleased to meet that most honest, brave, facetious, old associate."

When the session closed, Mr. Buxton occupied himself in a careful investigation of the evils of the system hitherto pursued towards the native tribes, and of the remedies to be applied.

In commencing these inquiries he as usual summoned to his aid the members of his family circle, especially those at Northrepps Cottage, whom he employed to make extracts from and abstracts of those documents which related to the tribes of South Africa.

To his Sister, Miss S. M. Buxton, at Northrepps Cottage.

"Earlham, Sept. 28. 1835.

"I hope you read Anna Gurney my letter about her preparing an epitome of Dr. Philip's letters. I am thus hard-hearted in taxing her strength, because I do believe that an able digest of these letters, sticking close to the text, might save a nation of

100,000 beings and several flourishing missions from destruction. It is a cause well worth an effort. I gave our new Colonial Secretary a disquisition to my heart's content on the treatment of savages, the death of Hintza, the atrocities of white men, and above all, on the responsibilities of a Secretary of State; and I gave him to understand that I knew there was a corner in the next world hotter than the rest for such of them as tolerate the abominations which we practise abroad. I feel happy that I let loose my mind, but I am afraid Ellis, of the London Missionary Society, was almost shocked at the recklessness of his lordship's feelings with which I spoke. I believe, however, that Lord Glenelg feels both soundly and warmly on the subject."

To Zachary Macaulay, Esq.

"Northrepps Hall, Oct. 1835.

"I am deeply interested about the savages, particularly the Caffres. Oh! we Englishmen are, by our own account, fine fellows at home! Who among us doubts that we surpass the world in religion, justice, knowledge, refinement, and practical honesty? but such a set of miscreants and wolves as we prove when we escape from the range of the laws, the earth does not contain."

When the statement of the South African case had been prepared, he communicated it to Lord Glenelg, accompanied by the following letter:—

"My dear Lord, "Northrepps Hall, Oct. 10. 1835.

"I send you by the mail to-morrow various documents relative to the commando system, the Caffre inroad, and Hintza's death. I think the papers sent establish—

"1st. That the colonists, or at least some of them, have long been actuated by an eager desire to get possession of the Caffre territory.

"2ndly. That the commando system has been the real cause of the war.

"3rdly. That facts are stated relative to the death of Hintza, which, if true, throw a deep reflection on the colonial authorities, and which demand a close inquiry.

"I cannot forbear adding, that I am persuaded the future peace of the colony, and the life or death of many thousands of human beings, depend upon your decision. That you may be guided to a righteous one, and that you may stand between the oppressor and his prey, is my heartfelt desire and prayer. Believe me, my dear Lord, with every sentiment of respect,

"Your faithful servant,

"T. FOWELL BUXTON."

Shortly after this he was exceedingly gratified at finding that the subject had been thoroughly investigated by Lord Glenelg, and that he had come to the conclusion that the Adelaide territory had been unjustly taken away from the Caffre people. Accordingly, with a regard for justice as rare as it was noble, his lordship determined not to acquiesce in our usurpation of the territory, but to restore it to its rightful possessors.

"Lord Glenelg," says Mr. Buxton in a letter to Mr. Macaulay, "has sent a most noble despatch to the Cape of Good Hope, restoring the territory we lately stole, to the Caffres, and laying down the soundest principles with respect to future intercourse with them." He was greatly pleased at finding that the Government had agreed to place protectors of the aborigines in every colony where the English came in contact with them, and he writes —

"Many other things did I hear equally delightful. I lay awake almost all last night from an exuberance of gratification and thankfulness; the image rising before me of the hunted people restored to their land; of Macomo, now so dejected, soon amazed with unlooked-for relief.

"How glad am I," he remarks in December 1835, "that I did not give way to the difficulties of obtaining a committee! I was too near letting it be postponed to another session. The events of the war, Hintza's death, and the clamours of the settlers for permission once more to spoil these 'irreclaimable savages,' have called the attention of the Government to our

evidence, and coming at the very nick of time, I have reason to know it affected the decision of the question."

When the news arrived that the restoration of the Caffres to their own lands in the Adelaide territory had been effected, he thus conveyed it to Miss Gurney of Northrepps Cottage*:—

"I have to tell you a piece of news, which has made me sing ever since I heard it. You, of all people, ought to have known it two or three days ago, and should, if I had not been too busy to write on Wednesday, and too desperately tired on Thursday. Well, what is it? It is life itself, and liberty, and lands and tenements to a whole nation.

"It is nothing short of this—the hand of the proud oppressor in Africa has been, under Providence, arrested, and a whole nation, doomed to ruin, exile, and death, has been delivered and restored to its rights. On a given day the drum was beat in the front of Tzatzoe's house, and the troops were marched directly back again to the British territory, and the 'fertile and beautiful Adelaide' was once more Caffreland. Only think how delighted must our savage friends be, and with what feelings must they have viewed our retreating army! Surely we must make a party, and pay King Macomo a visit. This is, indeed, a noble victory of right over might."

On the reappointment of the Aborigines Committee, in 1836, Dr. Philip brought over to England Tzatzoe, the Caffre chief alluded to above, and Andrew Stoffles, a Hottentot, to be examined before it. As a matter of course, Mr. Buxton invited them to his house, and the following description† gives an account of the evening which these children of the desert spent with him:—

"Dr. Philip dined here yesterday with his two African protégés, Tzatzoe‡ and Stoffles, Mr. Read, who had married a Caffre woman, and his half Caffre son, being also of the party.

* March 18. 1837. † Letter from Mrs. E. N. Buxton.

‡ A portrait of Tzatzoe will be found in Prichard's Nat. Hist. of Man, 3rd ed., p. 314.

Tzatzoe was dressed in fanciful English attire, with a gold-laced coat, something like a naval officer. He is rather a fine-looking, well-made man, but his hair is like a carpet. Both he and Stoffles behaved in a perfectly refined and gentlemanly manner. James Read acted as interpreter; he looks more like a Caffre than an Englishman; he is full of animation, and very clever and observing. He sat by Tzatzoe at dinner and kept up the conversation capitally. Tzatzoe was asked what struck them most in England? He said, 'First, the peace, no fighting, all looking "kind;" secondly, no beggars; everybody had their own business and wanted nothing of other men, but all looked comfortable and happy; thirdly, no drunkards, no fighting about the streets.' He was then asked, what he could mention to our discredit. He hesitated at first, but then boldly said we abused our Sabbaths: he was shocked to see the carriages about, and people selling in the streets; he admired the horses, but could not think what the donkeys had done to merit such different treatment: and as to the dogs, he thought it a most wicked thing 'to make them work like Hottentots.' He pleased my father very much by saying, that if it had not been for his labours in the committee, his nation must have been entirely extirpated. He told us, so great was the gratitude felt towards him, that in most of the Christian settlements about the Kat River they held a regular meeting every Wednesday evening to pray for Mr. Buxton, Dr. Philip, and Mr. Fairbairn. When Tzatzoe spoke in Caffre, Stoffles translated it into Dutch for Mr. Read. Doing this gradually roused up Stoffles himself, and now when we applied to him on the subject of infant schools he lighted up in a most extraordinary way, his heavy face beamed with life and pleasure, and he was all action and animation. Dr. Philip says, that in oratory he is quite the Lord Brougham of his country. * * * After dinner they sang to us: first, the three together a hymn in Dutch, then Tzatzoe and Read in Caffre, and then Stoffles alone sang a war song in Hottentot. It had a most extraordinary effect. Ices then came round. The poor men had seen none before, and the grimaces made at the first mouthful are not to be told. They could not eat more, but laughed heartily.

"When they were about to go away they commanded silence, and Stoffles rose formally, with Read to interpret, and made a

very good speech, returning thanks to his host. 'I thank God,' he said, 'that my life has been spared long encugh to come to England, and that Buxton's life has been spared long enough also for me to see him. I have long desired nothing so much, but never thought I should have that happiness. I hope Buxton will live much longer and continue to help the oppressed, and that he will never cease to hold his hand over my nation.' He thanked him heartily on behalf of all the Hottentots for his labours for them. Tzatzoe then rose and made a similar speech, expressing himself most warmly. My father then thanked them for their good wishes, and said he hoped their nation would go on improving, and especially that religion would increase among them, that they would be firm to their God and Saviour, for that was the only path to peace, to happiness, and to Heaven."

Even while the discussions on British slavery had been pending, Mr. Buxton's thoughts were often directed to the subject of the slave trade, as conducted by foreign nations, between the coast of Africa and the slave states of America and Cuba. So long before as 1832 Mr. Wilberforce had thus written to him: —

"Happening lately to have been led into some lucubrations on the slave trade, I was gradually excited into such an internal heat, that were I not to attempt to lessen the intensity of the flame by imparting a measure of it to you, I should almost become the victim of my own excessive inflammation. Happily, I am persuaded I need use no laborious exertions to excite your warmth. Let me beg you, unless you happen to have recently looked into this subject, do not suppose yourself to know it, but do review your inquiry and consideration, and you will be as ready to burst into a flame as I am. I feel, and shall feel, this affair the more, because I myself am not guiltless. I myself ought to have stirred in it more than I did before I left the House of Commons; and now that I am there no longer, you I consider as my heir-at-law; and I really believe, if you cannot get Government to concede to your wishes, you might carry the measure in the House of Commons. Farewell! may the blessing of God be with you and yours!"

But important as Mr. Buxton felt this subject to be, he could not enter upon it while his time and strength were engaged in the contest with the more immediate evil of British slavery. Now, however, he was able to examine it more closely.

"Bellfield, April 29. 1835.

"I had a pleasant journey, and the coach to myself, so I had plenty of time for both reading and reflection. I shall spend much of my time over the slave-trade question, in which I feel the deepest interest, and perhaps a quiet day here may be useful. I am very fond of this garden as a study, it is so lonely."

A day later he continues: —

"I am now going to wander about these charming walks with the slave-trade question on my mind. Then my uncle is to drive me with the four ponies. On Saturday I shall, I doubt not, take my place inside the Magnet, and after a pleasant ride, fruitful in meditation, have the great pleasure of getting home again. * * * The constant subject of my wondering gratitude is, that we have so much to be thankful for. Now for the garden."

To Miss Gurney, of Northrepps Cottage.

"54. Devonshire Street, May 6. 1835.

"I hope to bring forward the slave-trade question next Tuesday. I have abundance of facts, but the House of Commons 'careth for none of these things,' and I care very little for any political things, these excepted. I went to the Missionary Meeting yesterday, and made a speech, which I thought vastly fine, but I was singular in that opinion. The clergy are desperately sulky with me for my Church speech."

On the 12th of May, 1835, Mr. Buxton laid the results of his investigation before Parliament. He proved that though, at the Congress of Vienna, Spain and Portugal had received more than a million of money from England, on engaging to give up their traffic in men, yet that they were still carrying it on to

as great an extent as ever; no less than 264 vessels, avowedly engaged in the slave trade, having sailed from the single port of Havannah between January 1. 1827, and October 30. 1833 — this being but a small part of that detestable commerce. He moved for an address, suggesting the consolidation of all the treaties on this subject with various powers into one great league, which was to contain, amongst other clauses, a proposal for extending the right of search, for giving the right of seizure in the case of vessels equipped for the slave trade, though not actually having slaves on board, and for declaring the trade in slaves to be piracy. This address was agreed to.

"I now feel," he said on the following day, "as if the session was over. Let me see, what is there more for me to do? There is the Apprenticeship, 16th June; Aborigines, 14th July; Irish Education; and I must have another little touch at the Church, which they have so vilified me about."

Except that from time to time he brought the subject before the House, no further step could be taken for the present upon the slave question; but it continued to occupy his thoughts, and to be a source of continual solicitude.

CHAPTER XXIII.

1835, 1836.

ACCOUNTS FROM THE WEST INDIES. — MOTION FOR COMMITTEE OF INQUIRY. — CORRESPONDENCE. — WRITINGS, JANUARY, 1836. — COMMITTEE ON APPRENTICESHIP, MARCH, 1836. — LETTERS. — LETTER FROM MR. JOHNSTON. — IRISH CHURCH QUESTIONS. — SPEECH ON IRISH TITHE BILL, JUNE, 1836.

THE best news continued to arrive from the West Indies of the industry and excellent behaviour of the negroes, during the period to which the preceding chapter refers. Crime had rapidly diminished; marriages had considerably increased; education and religion were progressing. "The accounts from the West Indies are capital," writes Mr. Buxton, March 7. 1835; "this puts me into excellent spirits. The truth is, my spirits rise or fall according to the intelligence from that quarter."

To his Sister, Miss Buxton, Northrepps Cottage.

"House of Commons, March 16. 1835.

"I must give you a taste of the good news which I have received within this hour. Lord Aberdeen said yesterday that every thing was going on marvellously well in the West Indies. The negroes quiet, dutiful, diligent. 'It is quite amazing, it is contrary to reason, it cannot be accounted for, but so it is!' Just now Stanley came over to me, saying he had a letter from Lord Sligo* to-day, dated the 29th January. He read me the greater part of it, and most gratifying it was. The Christmas holidays had gone off more quietly than for many years. No case of riot had been reported, and the negroes had all returned to their work in good humour. The produce of the crop sent

* Then Governor of Jamaica.

to England would be a good average one. Lord Sligo had recalled all his troops and vessels (which had gone out to quell possible disturbances), because every thing was perfectly quiet. 'In short,' said Stanley, 'it is impossible that matters can be better than in the focus of danger—Jamaica; except it be,' he added, 'in Antigua.' Is not that something like good news? It makes me two inches higher for pride."

To Zachary Macaulay, Esq.

"Northrepps Hall, 1835.

"Now as to Jamaica, I send you copies of Lord Sligo's letters. It is curious that I have before me at this moment letters from him and Lord Mulgrave, in which they unite in saying, that so far from having exaggerated, we have never told a tithe of the horrors of slavery. What an honour, and what a privilege, to have had part in overturning such an abomination!"

The following is one of the letters from Lord Sligo, referred to above: —

To T. Fowell Buxton, Esq.

"My dear Sir, "Mansfield Street, 8th April.

"In reply to your inquiries, whether my opinions on slavery had undergone any change while I was in Jamaica, I beg to say, that when I went out there I thought that the stories of the cruelties of the slave owners, disseminated by your society, were merely the emanations of enthusiastic and humane persons, rather a caricature than a faithful representation of what actually did take place. Before, however, I had been very long in Jamaica, I had reason to think that the real state of the case had been far understated, and that, I am quite convinced, was the fact. I was an ardent supporter of emancipation before I went out, but after being there a short time I was shocked at ever having held different opinions.

"My dear Sir, most truly yours,

"SLIGO."

To Lord Suffield.

"March, 1835.

"The news from every part of the slave colonies is most excellent. I hear this from a variety of quarters—friends, enemies,

colonial bishops, and the Secretary of State. I saw a letter from the Bishop of Jamaica to the Bishop of London, saying every thing that we used to say; I recollect one expression—'the industry of the negroes when working for wages has so entirely belied the apprehensions of the planters here, that I have not a doubt of the entire success of the emancipation measure.' In short, we have every reason to be happy and to be thankful."

This was one of the last letters addressed by Mr. Buxton to his excellent coadjutor and friend. Lord Suffield was thrown from his horse on the 30th of June, 1835, and died a few days afterwards from the injuries he had received. "Every day since the event happened," writes Mr. Buxton, "I have felt more and more strongly what a calamity it is, and what a loss we have all sustained."

It was indeed a time when Lord Suffield's co-operation was particularly missed. The favourable accounts from the West Indies were chequered by intelligence of the occasional ill-treatment of the apprentices by their masters, who could not divest themselves of the habits formed under the system of slavery.

On the 19th of June, Mr. Buxton moved for a select committee to inquire whether the conditions on which the twenty millions had been granted, for the abolition of slavery, had been complied with; but upon receiving an assurance from the Government that the most vigilant measures had been taken, and would continue to be taken, on behalf of the newly emancipated people, he consented to withdraw his motion.

For so doing he was severely blamed by some of the more vehement abolitionists. He thus replies to one of those who had expressed himself with great warmth on the subject: —

"September 11. 1835.

"You think it right to say that you could see no reason for my withdrawing my motion, except it was a wish to please the ministers. I am conscious of a thousand defects in the management of our great question, but I do not and cannot charge myself with having at any time sacrificed one iota of our cause to please any set of men. You add, that 'I should have gained public confidence by pressing my motion to a division.' I hope you do not do me the injustice to suppose that a momentary popularity with you, or with those worthy and faithful men who think with you, would be bait enough to allure me to do that which I thought likely to prejudice the cause or impair the prospects of the negro. I should be still more unworthy than I am to be the advocate of that afflicted and oppressed race, if I were to be biassed by any such considerations; or if I sacrificed opinions, formed deliberately, with the whole facts before me, and with an earnest desire to be directed aright, to the wishes of friends, or foes, or ministers of the Crown.

"I have thought it right to enter thus at length into my views, that you may not be prevented from taking any steps in order to secure a division, when the subject comes to be debated in Parliament. Think of me as you please; I think you an honest man, a true friend to the negro, a faithful advocate of freedom; but I give you this unequivocal warning, that I never will take your advice as to my conduct on these questions, when I think that advice likely to be disastrous to those for whom we feel an equal concern.

"You are quite at liberty to show this to any body, or to publish it if you please."

A day or two later he thus writes to Mr. Macaulay:—

"The fact is, my apprehensions lie in a direction different from the apprenticeship. The planters will, I think, try for a vagrancy law, which will be slavery in reality, and for a permanence. Sorry should I be that by our want of support about the apprenticeship, the Government should be led to suppose that we could not make a good fight against a vagrancy law. Is it not dangerous, then, to reveal our weakness? or, rather, is it not dangerous to go to battle on a question where we have no chance of success? Some of our warm friends write in newspapers and

periodicals as if they believed that I should hesitate, because I did not like to offend the Government. I flatter myself you know that neither that, nor any personal consideration, should tempt me to betray the cause of our poor clients."

During this autumn the Rev. Mr. Trew left England for the West Indies, taking out with him the agents selected for schoolmasters. This was an occasion of deep interest to Mr. Buxton.

To the Rev. J. M. Trew.

"Northrepps, Dec. 1835.

"Many thanks for your letter just received. Depend on my disposition to 'strengthen your hands, and to make all reasonabl allowances.' The truth is, I feel very grateful to you for going out, and consider it my duty to do all to make your labours as light and as pleasant to you as possible. * * * And now I wish you God speed. In going you make a noble sacrifice of your living, and the derangement of your family; the opposition and persecution you will have to encounter, and many other similar things you have to surrender or to endure; but I trust that God's blessing will go with you, remain with you, remove difficulties, and crown you with success and with rejoicing."

On Jan. 1. 1836, he thus speaks of the end of one, the beginning of another year: —

"What mercies has the past year produced, and what events may the next unfold! My prayer at the beginning of 1835 was for myself, that I might give God my heart; that in matters public and private He would instruct me in the right way, especially in slave questions, the cause of natives, slave trade, instruction of negroes, and Church legislation.

"O God, grant that we may each of us be branches of the living vine, that are fed and nourished from the sacred stem; that we may bear fruit, and much fruit. I thank thee, O Lord, that I know there is none other source of profit to my own soul, or of usefulness to others save through Christ. If I abide in Him, I shall be enabled to bring forth rich clusters of heavenly fruit;

if not, a withered and unprofitable branch am I. Grant then, O Father, to thy weak, poor, most unworthy servant, that I may be the true servant of the Lord, that I may belong to Him, and may be made useful through the fructifying influence of His Spirit; that that Spirit may carry with it the whole man to His blessed service; that He being my ruler and guide, I may be enabled to do something this year for the negro race, — something towards delivering them from the remnants of their cruel bondage, — especially something for their souls; and may large flocks be brought to thy fold. May I this year do something towards the further abolition of the slave trade, and something for the natives of our colonies.

"Help me, O Lord, in forming a right judgment of the critical affairs of the Irish Church. Direct me aright, and let neither the love of liberal policy on the one hand, nor the fear of the resentment and reproach of the evangelical clergy on the other, lead me astray.

"May all peace and all profitable prosperity be granted in this year to all my relatives and friends. Each and severally I recall them, and present them before thee, craving health to the sick, consolation to the afflicted, strength to the weak, instruction to those who know not thy saving grace, and happiness, wisdom, grace, the guiding, the encouraging, the comforting influence of thy Holy Spirit to all. This year I shall have numbered half a century. It is a subject of deep meditation, where shall I be at the end of the next half-century? Through mercy, through love unbounded, through Christ, I trust that I shall be in His kingdom. Walk with me, tutor me to thy will, be with me in every struggle, shape out my course, be my wisdom, my guard, my guide, in every hour of this year, for Christ's sake."

The following memorandum, in Mr. Buxton's handwriting, appears on the last page of a book of 'Papers on the Abolition of Slavery:'—

"January 7. 1836.

"I have finished this collection of papers with a degree of satisfaction and thankfulness which I cannot express. My expectations are surpassed, God's blessing has been on this perilous work of humanity."

On the 22nd of March he moved for a committee to inquire into the working of the apprenticeship system. His investigations on that subject had cost him much time and labour; and he now brought forth a mass of statistical facts, proving, on the one hand, that the negroes had behaved extremely well, and on the other, that they had been harassed by vexatious by-laws and cruel punishments. "This is my case," he said, in conclusion; "it shows at least this: that if the planters have misconducted themselves, they can find no excuse for it in the conduct of the negroes. There has been no disappointment in that quarter."

The committee was granted, and Sir George Grey (the Under-Secretary for the Colonies) soon afterwards introduced a bill for enforcing, in Jamaica, certain measures in favour of the negroes.

The Aborigines Committee had likewise been reappointed, and Mr. Buxton's attention to these two subjects, in addition to matters connected with them, occupied him closely. A friend, who spent a day at his house in Devonshire Street during the spring of this year, described it as "curious, and almost fearful, to witness the multiplicity of business, the wave upon wave of deep interests which poured in upon him. No time for air or exercise, no time for relaxation." His strength was barely equal to the claims upon it. "Oh! how shall we throw up our hats," he said, "when I am out of Parliament!"

To the Rev. J. M. Trew.

"July 1. 1836.

"I am truly grieved not to hear a better report of your health, for I do regard it as *invaluable*. We are not less overworked at home. The Apprenticeship and Aborigines Com

mittees have been heavy and incessant work, and there are innumerable calls upon our best exertions.

"I look upon your exertions and those of your fellow-labourers with unmixed comfort. I hope that 'meekness of wisdom' may be yours, and I desire that we may all truly remember that '*One is our master.*' With cordial good wishes to you and yours, in which my family warmly join,

"I am," &c. &c.

To Zachary Macaulay, Esq.

"Renny Hill, Fifeshire, Sept. 6. 1836.

"Once more I have to feel how scandalous it is that I have been so remiss in writing to you, but I must lay the blame on the labours of the session. What with the Committee on the Apprenticeship, which occupied two days in the week, the Aborigines Committee, which occupied two more, the House itself, and my own private business, I was as much overworked, or more so, than at any former period; but for the last month I have done literally nothing, except learn to sleep in my bed, and to eat at my meals, arts which I had nearly lost while in London.

"It is, however, full time that I should tell you something of my impression as to the effect of the Apprenticeship Committee. I think we proved, beyond dispute, that the negroes are subjected to many oppressions quite at variance with the intentions of the Abolition Act. On the other hand, it was proved that these had gradually, but decidedly, abated, and that feelings of hostility had much subsided.

"In discussing the report, I was placed in a difficult and painful position. Johnston was in Scotland; O'Connell could not often attend; in short, had I divided upon its continuance, I should have been alone. I contented myself, therefore, with a protest, and got for my moderation the introduction of a paragraph declaring that, after 1840, the negroes were to have 'unqualified freedom,' and to be subject to no other restrictions than those imposed on white labourers at home. This, to my mind, is a great victory. The Government are pledged up to their teeth to consent to no act which shall in any way cripple or encroach upon perfect freedom when the apprenticeship ceases.

"The Mico teachers are going on excellently well in the West Indies. They describe the thirst for instruction among the coloured people as excessively strong.

"The Aborigines Committee went on exceedingly well. I wonder whether you have seen Lord Glenelg's despatch about the seizure of the Caffre territory. It is most admirable, and is about the first instance of a nation acting towards the weak on the principles of justice and Christianity.

"I begin to hope that my period of public service is nearly expired, and that I shall be so fortunate as to be turned out at the next election. I should not be satisfied if I resigned; but if I stood and failed, I should think it a most happy consummation."

Mr. Buxton's friends were anxious that he should not expose his broken health to the fatigue of another Parliament. His uncle, Mr. Charles Buxton, had written him a pressing letter upon this subject. In reply, he says:—

* * * * "At present I am remarkably well, have no headache, and no complaint, except rather too good an appetite. I have received very encouraging accounts from the West Indies of the conduct of the negroes, and this I am sure will please you. Three years ago, it appeared, by official returns, that in Jamaica there were 300,000 floggings with the cartwhip in a year. Last year the number was reduced nine-tenths, from 300,000 to 30,000. The result being such, I grudge neither the time, nor the money, nor the labour, nor the health I have spent on this object; and I hope this consideration will make you better satisfied with my having been in Parliament. Can I, as an honest man, retire now, when I know for a certainty that the effect of my motion in the House, last year and the year before, has been to frighten the magistrates, and to save the backs of thousands of poor fellows from unmerciful floggings?

"You may say what you please, I know it is all in kindness for me; but I also know that if you were in my place, no personal consideration would be sufficient to prevail on you to abandon your duty."

His conduct upon these committees has been well portrayed by his son-in-law, Mr. A. Johnston, who was his companion and assistant in them, and who supplied the place of a private secretary during the last three years that he was in Parliament. His remarks, as will be seen, refer also to the earlier and still more important warfare on the slavery question, in which Mr. Johnston had been one of his most faithful allies.

"I had," says Mr. Johnston, "been well acquainted with Mr. Buxton's name, and had watched his proceedings with interest, before I entered Parliament in 1831. Shortly after I took my seat, I introduced myself to him as one who aimed at being enlisted under his Anti-slavery banner, and before long I was honoured with that friendship which I ever felt I could not sufficiently prize. I was soon strongly impressed by seeing his almost exclusive devotedness to the object he had in hand at any given time; he spared no pains to achieve his purpose, he was constantly on the watch, and by his tact and perseverance frequently succeeded in obtaining documents which would otherwise have remained in obscurity. Often did he patiently wait till the end of the usually long debates for the small chance of success in a motion for papers; often did one tiresome opponent, in particular, who seemed to make it his peculiar vocation to hinder his progress, succeed in frustrating his endeavours, after he had remained till two or three o'clock in the morning. Then did Mr. Buxton, night after night, postpone the motion till a favourable opportunity should arrive, and in our refreshing walks home, in the early cool morning, after the heat, glare, and fatigue of the House, he betrayed no impatience, but showed himself content to labour on, accepting with thankfulness every little success which he was permitted to enjoy in this harassing but most necessary portion of his duty.

"He was very often at the Foreign Office; and at the Colonial Office he was, during the sitting of Parliament, almost a daily visitor. Though his proceedings called forth bitter opposition from some quarters, and though the Government generally resisted his proposals, at least for a time, I soon saw that his

honesty and singleness of purpose, his manly understanding, and the weight of his character, commanded a decided and increasing influence in Downing Street. He was thoroughly liked and respected in the House, and yet his constant urbanity and kind feeling, even towards his bitterest opponents, ought to have disarmed them more than it seemed to do. His firmness was sometimes exposed to severe trials. I remember in particular the debate of May, 1832, when the Government, who were unwilling to oppose his resolutions directly, endeavoured to neutralise their effect by a 'rider.' He was earnestly entreated by a great many members to consent to this without dividing the House; but, strong in his own conviction of what was right, he resisted them all. I sat by him through the whole of that anxious evening, and was astonished at the firmness which he displayed. He obtained a large minority, but many of those who voted in it were very angry with him for placing them in opposition to the ministry.

"This debate led to the appointment of a committee, on which I was one of Mr. Buxton's nominees, as well as on those which were subsequently appointed at his instance, on the state of the Aborigines connected with our colonies, and on the working of apprenticeship in the West Indies. These cost him very many toilsome hours. Nothing, indeed, could exceed the perseverance with which he pursued his inquiries or the zeal with which he endeavoured to elicit truth. His energy never flagged, nor do I remember his ever losing temper in the fatigues and annoyances of these labours. In general, at the rising of the committee, when the members were summoned to the House, a number of persons were in waiting, each of whom had his own observations on the evidence, or his suggestions, to submit to Mr. Buxton, or it might be some grievance to bring under his notice, or some scheme of benevolence for which his patronage was requested. Each of these watched his opportunity, probably believing his own to be the business of all others paramount in importance. To all these persons he was accessible, and, though exhausted by his previous exertions, to all he gave a patient and attentive ear. Often on these occasions I have urged him to break away from this additional strain upon his mind, and leave the heated committee-room, but he invariably persevered until he had dismissed his numerous applicants, satisfied with the

manner of their reception, and charmed with his great kindness and consideration.

"For some years Mr. Buxton and myself were associated with a select band of members of Parliament, who, though of varied and even opposite political opinions, met on every 'House night,' for a short period, to enjoy confidential intercourse on the one subject upon which all were agreed.

"Reading from Scripture and prayer were the leading objects for which we assembled. Mr. Buxton was one of the most constant attendants, and very often 'the chaplain.' Nor can I doubt that these meetings greatly strengthened and sustained him, under the fierce opposition with which he was too often assailed."

In one of Mr. O'Connell's speeches on some Irish question, he exclaimed, "Oh! I wish we were blacks! If the Irish people were but black, we should have the honourable member for Weymouth coming down as large as life, supported by all 'the friends of humanity' in the back rows, to advocate their cause."

This allegation was jocosely made, but it was not entirely wide of the truth. Every thing connected with the African race seemed to touch a chord of feeling in Mr. Buxton's heart, and to bear a stronger sway over his sympathies than any other subjects could attain.

Yet the affairs of Ireland deeply interested him. "Never," he said, in 1835, "did I make any public subject, except slavery, a matter of so much prayer as this question of the Irish Church." Being, as he was, a thorough Whig, the natural bias of his mind was to support the measures of that party.

"But," said he, "the Irish Church is too sacred. I am a Protestant and a churchman, and I would not sacrifice an iota of either for all the political connections in the world; so I was for some time a waverer; exactly what Hume called *a*

loose fish, and which sort of loose fish he afterwards described as a wolf in sheep's clothing. Rumour ran that the Whigs were going to assign part of the Church revenues to the Roman Catholics. I resolved to resist, having come to the conclusion that, if a surplus were proved, it ought to be given to religious education. To my surprise and satisfaction, I found that the plan I had worked out in my closet, and which I meant to adhere to, in defiance of them, was precisely what they had resolved on."

Some of the reasons which had brought him to this decision are thus mentioned in a rough memorandum:—

"700*l.* tithes from parish of Killeen:—you give 75*l.* to your working curate, and 625*l.* to Sir H. L. at Bath. Pray is this a religious use, or ecclesiastical? I have a butler; pay him 700*l.* He, too rich to work, hires a deputy for 75*l.* I say, as the deputy does the work, I may as well hire him; save 625*l.* Is my establishment in danger? No; but more means to make it more perfect in other respects.

"Church not in danger. Sir H. L. in danger—of being obliged to do his duty."

He moved, however, as an amendment to Lord John Russell's motion, the insertion of the words "moral and religious," instead of "general" education; and a provision for the resumption of the surplus by the Church when required.*

The following letter was addressed, after that debate, to his two younger sons at Northrepps:—

"Devonshire Street, April 3. 1835.

"My dear Fowell and Charles,

"C. will tell you how I have been engaged this week. It has been very laborious work. I did not get to bed this morning till broad daylight, near seven o'clock; so I suppose you were up before I was down.

"I have scarcely time to write, as I must be at the House of

* Hansard, April 2. 1835.

Commons again early, and there I shall be kept all night I suppose; but I am quite equal to the exertion, and (I must confess it) somewhat cheered and exhilarated by the success of last night's effort. Work hard, my lads, and what you do learn, remember; fix it in your minds, and then write it in your commonplace books. The passage of my speech last night which was best liked was a quotation picked up by me some thirty years ago, when I was a youth—planted in my mind—and there it was when I wanted it. I have just been taking a delightful walk with your dear sister Priscilla, talking about slavery, and savages, and slave trade. Whenever I want to clear and brighten up my mind, I find nothing so effectual as an interchange of thoughts with her.

"Give my best love to the ladies at the Cottage, and tell them, that there, on the table before me, lie their Caffre papers, and I now and then glance at them, and smile at them as a treasure. Tell Miss Glover I am going to treat her as the king treated Daniel. I call upon her, not only to interpret my dream, but to tell me what my dream is.

"I want her to find a passage to this effect: 'Our religion braves the face of day; it does not skulk from truth.' But where is it? Oh, that is more than I know. I think it is either in a volume of South*, or in the fourth volume of Hopkins; and I think it is on the bottom of the left-hand page, and marked by me. If she can find it by these clear directions, and will send it to me, the world shall have it. I think you might ride over to Sheringham, to tell them all the news; they would be so pleased to find that we were pleased.

"I was delighted to have Edward at the House last night; I was sure of one auditor who would listen attentively, and judge with partial acuteness."

Mr. Buxton's readiness to go hand-in-hand with Dissenters in any work of mercy, and the hearty friend-

* He quoted this passage from Dr. South, in his speech in the following year. It stands thus:—"Some of their (the Roman Catholic) clergy deal with their religion as with a great crime; if it is discovered, they are undone. But our religion is a religion that dares to be understood, that offers itself to the search of the inquisitive, to the inspection of the severest and most awakened reason; for, being secure of her substantial truth and purity, she knows that for her to be seen and looked into is to be embraced and admired."

ship with which he was honoured by many eminent Christians of different persuasions, gave rise to an impression that he had little affection for the Established Church. This impression was entirely erroneous.

"I look up," he said, "to the Established Church with grateful affection; I hail her as the great bulwark of religious truth, and I can conceive no calamity greater than any inroad made on her security. But I must avow that I am an enemy to every species of intolerance; justice to every man, charity to every man, are parts of the religion I profess."

Thrown, as he had been, amongst pious and benevolent Dissenters, he could not but rejoice in the deep fellowship of heart which existed between them and him; but he was not the less firmly attached to his own branch of the Church of Christ: he loved her sublime and solemn ritual, and he looked upon her as a most important means of preserving and propagating Christian truth. But he could not consider any particular form of church-government as having come from God, and therefore too sacred to be touched by the hand of man. Accordingly, his desire to increase the efficiency of the Church led him to seek the reform of those abuses which, during the lapse of ages, had crept into her institutions. But on this, as on all other important occasions, he did not act without deep deliberation and earnest prayer for guidance. In the lists * which he made almost every Sunday, of the subjects to be dwelt upon in his family prayers, "the Church" is, at this period, usually inserted as one on which he required help and direction.

* These were mere notes, to aid him in his family devotions; they were not the same as the papers of religious meditations, from which extracts have been given before.

For instance, the following notes for his family prayers were written by him when about to leave Northrepps in February, 1836, to engage in the duties of the session: —

"In removing, we pray that that merciful Providence, which has stood round about us, may continue; sheltered, refreshed, counselled, strengthened by thee. Ward off danger, baffle our enemy, rob sin of its temptations; make us wholly, in inward thoughts and outward deeds, thine own.

"Be thou the mover of every work in which we engage.

"The counsellor to teach us what to say and do.

"The source of strength, confidence, and comfort.

"May we labour not with eye-service, but in singleness of heart.

"Bless those rising from bondage, and all efforts on their behalf; the heathen, suffering from the evils and oppression of men calling themselves Christians; and may a choice blessing rest on the efforts made for their physical advantage and religious advancement.

"Bless the spread of education, and of thy truth.

"Bless me in dealing with the Church; no self-will, no meaner motive than a desire to advance its interests."

Nor did he omit to use every means of rendering himself fully acquainted with the case. Writing to the Bishop of London, to request information on many points connected with it, he adds,—"I trust the importance of the subject, and my anxiety to be fully persuaded as to my vote upon it, will be my excuse for giving your lordship so much trouble." These examples prove, that, whether his conduct on these Church questions did or did not deserve the severe reprobation which it received from many of his religious friends, it was, at least, not undertaken in a spirit of rash self-confidence.

The second reading of Lord John Russell's Irish Tithe Bill was brought forward on the 1st of June. Mr. Buxton argued strongly in favour of each of the

three leading clauses, which provided, in his own words, "First, that the incumbent should no longer apply to the wretched cottager and impoverished tenant, but should have his claim upon the land itself." "Will any one," exclaimed he, "pretend to say that this is ruin, or even peril to the Church?" "Secondly, that the funds of the Irish Church should be more equally distributed among its ministers." "The present system," he said "by which the Church is often liberal and bountiful to the ineffective, and parsimonious to the useful labourer, is not merely injustice, but also the worst husbandry in the world." "Thirdly, that the remuneration to the clergy should thereafter be confined within certain limits on either hand." "It should be," he said, "not a state of poverty, not a state of abundance; it should neither rise so high as to attract the envy of the people, nor fall so low as to forfeit their respect. * * * Again, I ask, where is the wickedness of all this, and where lies the danger?"

He strongly supported the plan of giving the surplus fund (after the new distribution of the Church revenues) to defray the expense of a system of education in which as much of the Bible was to be read as the Roman Catholics would allow.

"Do I say that this is enough? No! I lament that Scripture is thus sparingly doled out. * * * But though this system does not do all, it does much. It teaches the Catholic to read — it gives him a portion of Scripture to read." "I have better faith," he added, "in the truth of my religion, than to dread that instruction can damage it; and this is good old sound Protestant doctrine."

He concluded by pointing out how little the harsh system hitherto pursued had done towards the spread of truth: —

"How has it been," he asked, "that truth itself, backed by a Protestant establishment, by a Protestant king, a Protestant army, a Protestant parliament — that truth itself, so far from advancing, has not kept her ground against error? My solution of the question is, that we have resorted to force where reason alone could prevail. We have forgotten that though the sword may do its work — mow down armies and subdue nations — it cannot carry conviction to the understanding of men; nay, the very use of force tends to create a barrier to the reception of that truth which it intends to promote. We have forgotten that there is something in the human breast — no base or sordid feeling, the same which makes a generous mind cleave with double affection to a distressed and injured friend, and which makes men cleave with tenfold fondness — deaf to reason, deaf to remonstrance, reckless of interest, prodigal of life — to a persecuted religion. I charge the failure of Protestant truth in converting the Irish upon the head of Protestant ascendancy.

"Protestant ascendancy! It sounds well enough in English ears. It seems to mean no more than the Church under the peculiar protection of the State; but happy had it been for the Protestant Church had Protestant ascendancy never been heard of — happy had it been had we dared to present our truth to the Irish, not in arms, not in pomp, not decorated with the symbols of earthly power, but in that lowliness and gentleness which naturally belong to it.

"But I dare not trespass longer on the House. I like the bill, and shall vote for it; first, because tithe is adjusted; secondly, because stipend is to be measured by duty; thirdly, because education is to be granted. I like and shall vote for the bill, lastly, because it bears no affinity to the old overbearing system of Protestant ascendancy; and because, as I have so often said, it gives my faith fair play; because, at last the Protestant religion will do herself justice. Stripped of her odious disguise, she will appear to the Irish what we know she is. She will appear in her natural, her peaceful, her charitable, her attractive character."

This speech gave great displeasure to many of his clerical friends, who conceived that he was bent on the ruin — though all he desired was the temperate reform

— of the Irish Church establishment; and although "he had taken the opportunity," as he writes the day after the debate, "of separating himself from the Radicals by condemning Hume's proposal for paying church-rates out of the money to be saved from bishops and deans."

To Joseph John Gurney, Esq.

"The Vicarage, Lowestoft, 1836.

"* * * Francis Cunningham preached a noble sermon last night; plain, strong, earnest, and no self about it. It would not have disgraced Goat Lane*, as I have heard those there and at Bradpole, which would have done honour to a cathedral.

"It is curious and instructive to see Francis and his wife going full drive, and devoting their all to their sacred calling. I love, at least I think I love the *real thing* — this entire dedication, whether it displays itself among Churchmen or Dissenters. But I am not flattered by Churchmen for my views! Our friend —— writes thus to Francis: — 'Buxton cuts me to the heart; I never read such hollow, weak, flashy, unsatisfactory speeches in my life.' And this but represents the general impression among Evangelicals, for whom I feel, nevertheless, the strongest affection, and with whom, I must add (though they would be indignant at my presumption if they heard it), the strongest union."

* The Friends' Meeting House, in Norwich.

CHAPTER XXIV.

1836.

SCOTLAND.—CAPERCAILZIE.—LETTERS.—HABITS OF LIFE AT NORTHREPPS.—ORDER.—LOVE OF POETRY.—HIS DOMESTIC CHARACTER.—LETTERS.

OVERWROUGHT with toil and anxiety, Mr. Buxton was delighted to escape to Scotland in the beginning of August. While he was on this tour, the Marquis of Breadalbane, with true Highland hospitality, placed one of his moors at his disposal, and accordingly he remained for some time at Dalmally, and afterwards at Luib *, enjoying the sport afforded by the surrounding country.

Wishing to express his sense of this act of kindness, he applied to his relative, Mr. Llewellyn Lloyd †, who was residing in Sweden, engaging him to use his best exertions to procure as many live capercailzie as possible, as a present to Lord Breadalbane.

The capercailzie, or cock of the woods, as it is well known, were in former times denizens of the Scotch forests, but the last specimen was shot about a hundred years ago in Perthshire. They are large birds, a full-grown cock weighing about twelve pounds; they live, for the most part, in larch forests, and are found throughout Sweden and Norway. Mr. Lloyd sent

* While at Luib Inn he was rendered uneasy after two or three days by the non-appearance of his letters. "I understood you had a post here," said he to the landlord. "Oh yes, sir," was the reply, "but the last day or two he has been out shooting with you."

† Author of "Northern Field Sports."

advertisements for live capercailzie to the villages up the country. These advertisements, according to the Swedish custom, were read from the pulpits after divine service; and in the course of the winter thirteen cocks and sixteen hens were procured, which were placed under the care of Larry Banvill (Mr. Buxton's faithful Irish gamekeeper), who had been sent to Sweden for the purpose, and by whom they were successfully conveyed to Taymouth Castle. After a time they were all turned out into the large woods at Taymouth, in which they have thriven so well that they are now stated to amount to about two thousand; and as several other proprietors have followed the example, and have introduced them from Sweden, there is every reason to expect that this fine bird will become once more naturalised in Scotland.*

Mr. Buxton writes from Loch-earn-head: —

"August 27. 1836.

"I am astonishingly idle, and it agrees with me beyond any other medicine. I do not get much shooting, but plenty of walking and wetting, plenty of appetite, and plenty of sleep. Sad thoughts of distant friends cloud the imagination, but the bodily benefit is still obtained. I certainly wanted a holiday, and in one sense I have got a complete one, for I have nothing to do, nothing to read, and this is almost the only letter I have written for a week."

The illness of his sister-in-law, Mrs. Samuel Hoare, was one of the painful circumstances to which he refers

* When the Queen visited Lord Breadalbane in 1842, he kindly permitted my brother and myself (then staying in the neighbourhood) to shoot the first of these birds that had been killed in Scotland for a hundred years, in preparation for Her Majesty's dinner. They were so extremely wild, that it took the whole day to get six shots. We could just see them vanishing from the tops of the tall larches while we were still a great distance from them, and we could only kill them by using cartridges of No. 3. — Ed.

as clouding his enjoyment. On receiving the account of her death, he writes from the house of Mr. Johnston to the Bishop of Calcutta:—

"Renny Hill, Fife, Sept. 10., 1836.

"Our minds have been occupied of late by a most sad event — the death of my wife's sister. I am sure you must remember Mrs. Samuel Hoare of Hampstead. I hardly know how to speak of her as I ought; she was almost as dear to me as anything upon earth. For more than thirty years I have been united to her in the closest intimacy. In all that time I cannot recollect one moment's ruffle between us, or one word which betokened anything but affection or love. But what is my loss compared with that of her husband and children? She came as near perfection as any human being I ever knew. It was not that she had one kind of merit carried to a great height. She possessed each accomplishment of a female and a Christian in the same rare degree. Soft and gentle as she was, she was no less steadfast, firm, and immoveable. To these moral qualities, to the most winning manners, to a noble countenance, to the utmost refinement and delicacy, she joined an intellect of a very high order. Her views on every subject were broad and capacious. There was nothing petty about her. * * * She laid out her talents to the best advantage, and never was idle. She read a great deal, and turned all her reading to account, as her Tracts and her Hints on early Education evince. * * * I know not why I pour out all this to you, but my mind and my pen can turn to no other subject."

After spending a few weeks at Renny Hill, Mr. Buxton returned to Northrepps, and resumed the usual tenor of his life there during the autumnal months. Every year seemed to increase his delight at leaving behind him the cares and turmoils of London; and often, when nearly worn out by the fatigues of the session, would Swift's lines rise to his lips:—

"Thus in a sea of folly toss'd,
My choicest hours of life are lost;
Yet always wishing to retreat,
Oh, could I see my country seat!

There, leaning near a gentle brook,
Sleep, or peruse some ancient book;
And there in sweet oblivion drown
Those cares that haunt the court and town.
O charming noons! and nights divine!
* * * * * *
Each willing to be pleased, and please,
And e'en the very dogs at ease!"

His system on coming into the country was, after a thorough arrangement of his personal affairs, to abandon the first few weeks to the relaxation of field sports. Towards the end of October, when Mr. Hoare usually left Norfolk, Mr. Buxton resumed his settled occupations, and was strict in devoting to them the best hours of the day. He thus adapted to himself some well-known lines of Sir Edward Coke:—

"Secure six hours for thought, and one for prayer,
Four in the fields, for exercise and air,
The rest let converse, sleep, and business share."

Six hours may appear a large proportion of his day to give to reflection, but his singular power of sustained and concentrated thought was unquestionably the most remarkable feature of his mind. Not, indeed, that he had a turn for meditation upon speculative or philosophical questions, but when (as very often happened) his decision was required upon practical matters of an intricate character, he would wrap his mind in reflection upon them with an intensity not often equalled. He could not, like some, take a question by storm, and in a moment put every doubt to flight; he seemed to give every difficulty its fullest weight, and to balance the arguments on one side against the arguments on the other with accurate care; giving them such close attention, that, whatever might be going on around him, his mind could scarcely be diverted by anything from its track. When going to London with various important

matters on his hands, he would often take a list of them with him, and going regularly through it, would clench his mind upon them one after the other, till, by dint of strenuous thought, he had mastered all their bearings and made up his mind for ever. Once decided, he seldom turned to the question again. His character may be said to have been formed of *a durable material*, so that an impression once effectually made seemed never to be obliterated, scarcely even to lose the sharpness of its edge, by the lapse of years.* This quality was seen in lesser as well as in greater matters, and in no instance was it more displayed than in the important point of *order*. The love of order, and power to maintain it, had certainly not been given him by nature; for many busy years of his life, his study, wherever it might happen to be, seemed a chaos of confusion, crowded with heaps of books and papers, letters and documents, unsorted and unlabelled,—nor would he allow any one to touch them. But in the year 1827 he was vividly impressed by a casual view of the order and precision maintained in one of the Government offices. After the illness of that year, when he could not bear mental application, a favourable opportunity presented itself for carrying out his resolution to have his "papers in subjection." For three weeks he devoted himself, with his domestic helpers, to this task; every document in his possession, public and private, was looked over, folded to a certain size, with its contents accurately endorsed upon it, and then classified. The parcels of papers were tied up in boards made to the same size, legibly marked; the

* In early life he was often unpunctual in his attendance at church; but after hearing a sermon from the Rev. Samuel Crowther on the duty of being present at the beginning of public worship, and joining in the confession, he was thoroughly convinced, and was never again (as he said himself thirty years after) late at church through carelessness.

more copious subjects, such as slavery, filling many of these packets, under different subdivisions. Pigeon-holes in his bookcases and other expedients were provided, by which these packets were so placed as to be instantly accessible. The work once accomplished, he never relaxed in it again ; from this time to the end of his life every paper that came into his hands was subjected to the same regulations, and his various secretaries well remember the playful but unremitting strictness with which he required the execution of his plans in this respect. The same principle extended to all his pecuniary affairs. He had some unalterable rules about money matters, which preserved him from the dangers that might otherwise have resulted from his natural tendency to free expenditure. In his private accounts he was exact, but not minute; and once a-year he thoroughly investigated the whole state of his property. At the beginning of his private ledger the following sentences were written: —

> "'Quid refert igitur quantis jumenta fatiget
> Porticibus, quantâ nemorum vertetur in umbrâ,
> Jugera quot vicina foro, quas emerit ædes?
> Nemo malus felix.' — *Juvenal*, Sat 4.

"'What need so much provision for so short a journey?' — Hopkins, vol. iv. p. 57.

"'What a nothing it is that we make so much of, and follow so greedily, and hold so fast!' — Baxter, vol. iii. p. 429.

"'To work our own contentment, we should not labour so much to increase our substance, as to moderate our desires.' — Bishop Sanderson.

"'He that getteth riches, and not by right, shall leave them in the midst of his days, and at his end shall be a fool.' — Jeremiah, chap. xvii. verse 11."

He was an excellent man of business, handling minute details with ease and unfailing patience, yet always

keeping his eye fixed upon their general scope and bearing. Before undertaking any thing, he would ponder over the matter for days together, weighing it and examining it again and again before he put his shoulder to the wheel. But though he was too deliberate to be a vehement man, he was in the highest degree energetic. He feared neither fatigue nor labour. Where he gave his mind, he gave the whole of it. When once resolved to act, he threw his whole heart and soul into the attainment of the object before him; every wish and feeling became swept into the vortex; nothing else seemed capable of attracting his interest, nor would he leave it till it was done, and done well.

Except that his hospitalities were more bounded by want of room, his life at Northrepps was much the same as it had been at Cromer Hall, domestic yet social. The mornings were spent, as has been said, in his study or with his gun; and after dinner he usually lay upon the sofa, while some one read aloud to him from the passing literature of the day. Reading, in fact, filled up every leisure hour; he never tired of listening to it. "Well, what shall we read?" was the first question upon his entering the drawing-room; and he paid the closest attention, being always able to repeat the words that terminated the passage read on the previous evening. He had a great taste for biography, perhaps still more for works of humour; but especially he had, as he said himself, an "insatiable thirst for military adventure." His love of poetry has been alluded to before, and he endeavoured to cultivate the same taste in those about him. Every Sunday evening his children were expected to repeat a passage of poetry, and he always required the utmost fluency and accuracy in the repetition: he insisted also on the reciter looking him full in the face

while going through the task. He distributed his rewards with his usual open-handed generosity, and sometimes his guests were playfully invited to join in the exercise, and received their half-crown with the rest. His frequent quotations (especially from Shakspeare, Pope, and Dryden) showed how thoroughly his mind was imbued with the writings of the principal English poets. Johnson's "Vanity of Human Wishes" was a favourite with him. On the well-known lines —

> "In life's last scene, what prodigies arise,
> Fears of the brave, and follies of the wise."—

"I take that," he remarked, "to be one of the truest things ever said in poetry; but," he added, "the word 'last' should be omitted. Life is *crowded* with 'fears of the brave, and follies of the wise.'"

With Cowper's poems he became acquainted somewhat late in life. He was with a shooting party at Marham (the seat of Mr. Villebois, in Norfolk), when, being driven in by rain, and thoroughly wetted, he retreated to his room. It happened that there was no book there but a volume of Cowper's poems. He read them for hours, and ever afterwards took the greatest delight in them. For more modern poetry he had less taste, but to that of Sir Walter Scott he would listen again and again with the keenest enjoyment. When tea was finished, he usually walked into his study, and returned after a time with any letters or papers connected with his undertakings that he might have received or written in the course of the day, and the reading of these, with the discussions upon them, which he encouraged, usually occupied the remainder of the evening. In all Missionary enterprises he took the liveliest interest, listening with avidity to intelligence of their progress. Many

private communications of this nature were also made to him; especially from Africa and the West Indies. He annually made himself complete master of the affairs and proceedings of the Bible Society, his fidelity to which never wavered. "I am ready to confess," he once wrote, "that there is no cause, not even Emancipation itself, to which I would more readily give a helping hand than to the Bible Society."

Some mention ought to be made of the part he took in the establishment of the London City Mission. He was not alarmed at the novelty and boldness of the experiment; its catholic character was completely to his taste, and it always received his adherence and generous support. On its first foundation by Mr. David Nasmith, in September 1835, he wrote to that gentleman:—

"Dear Sir,

"I have only reached home within these five minutes; but, in order to save the post, which is just starting, I write at once to say that I will, with pleasure, accept the office of treasurer; and only hope that you are right and I am wrong as to the propriety of the selection."

This office he held till his death.

His family were early trained to take an interest in his pursuits, and to share in his hopes and fears; he encouraged the remarks and the criticisms even of its younger members, and would accept from them the most trivial assistance. Indeed, he seemed to have a strong feeling of personal gratitude to any one who would share his solicitude for the welfare of his black clients. "From the time that I became closely connected with him," writes Mr. Johnston, "I saw how much of his time and mind were given to his great objects, in his domestic circle, as well as in his study.

He had a happy art of imbuing all those around him with his own feelings, and of inducing them to give him their most strenuous aid. He was, indeed, a delightful chief to work for, so stimulating yet so indulgent, and so ready to repay, with lavish liberality, every effort, however trifling, made on behalf of those to whom he was devoting not labour only, but life itself. * * * His generosity, in fact, was unbounded — he seemed to watch for opportunities of heaping kindness upon those he loved."

The extreme tenderness of his feelings was especially shown if any of them were in sickness or distress; or when he received them again under his roof after any lengthened absence, — "Never, I think," observed one, "was such a welcome seen on any human face." His papers bear witness to his unremitting, untiring "labours in prayer" for the members of his family; they are individually mentioned, on every occasion, with discriminating affection, and striking, indeed, was the solemnity and the fervour with which he poured out his supplications.

As a parent he was remarkably indulgent: a trivial instance may be quoted from one of his letters to Mrs. Buxton.

"I write now about the coursing to-morrow. As —— did not behave well and kindly, you were quite right in deciding to deprive him of the sport to-morrow: but, as it is so very great a pleasure to me to think of him as happy and enjoying himself, I hope you will for this time excuse him, and that he will make a point of repaying the indulgence by very good behaviour. Thus we shall think of him as happy and good too." *

* In order that this letter might be in time for the coursing, he sent a man over with it from Norwich, a distance of 20 miles.

Nothing was more remarkable than the activity of his kindness in small things: the pains he would take to give pleasure. In the midst of his business he would help his children to find their lost playthings, or go out himself to buy what they might want; nor did they fear to interrupt his studies with the most trifling requests. At the time of his hardest work in London, he would often, on his way to the House, buy pictures, and conceal them in his waste-paper basket, to enjoy the glee of his younger children, and their daily renewed astonishment, at discovering them there in the morning.

His manner to them, as they grew older, is shown in the following casual mention of it by one of his sons, then a mere boy:—

"I cannot help being struck with the exquisite tenderness of heart which my father always displays; his unwillingness to debar us from pleasure, the zeal with which he will make any sacrifice or take any trouble to gratify us, is most surprising. One little example to-day will describe his whole conduct. He, being really unwell, was lying nearly asleep on the sofa, and observing me upon another, with my feet hanging over the side, he quietly got up, placed a chair under them, and then lay down again. His whole appearance, with his worn and thoughtful face, is so much that of a man whom one would approach with some sensation of awe, that these small, though exquisite acts of tenderness, are the more unexpected, and, consequently, the more pleasing."

He occasionally, but very rarely, gave direct admonitions. The following letter was addressed to one of his sons on entering Trinity College, Cambridge:—

"My dear ——,

"It is always a disappointment to me to be absent when my boys are at home; but I particularly regretted being away last week, as I think I might have done something for your shooting before you went to College. I need not, I hope, tell you of

the extreme interest I take in the launch of your little skiff on the ocean of life, and how heartily I desire that 'soft airs and gentle heavings of the wave' may accompany your voyage; and that you may be safely piloted into the serene and lovely harbour prepared by the love of God. It is not often that I trouble my children with advice; and never, I believe, unless I have something particular to say. At the present time I think I have that to say which is deeply important to your success in the business of life; nay, its effects may extend beyond the grave. You are now a man, and I am persuaded that you must be prepared to hold a very inferior station in life to that which you might fill, unless you resolve, with God's help, that whatever you do, you will do it *well;* unless you make up your mind that it is better to accomplish perfectly a very small amount of work than to half-do ten times as much. What you do know, know thoroughly. There are few instances in modern times of a rise equal to that of Sir Edward Sugden. After one of the Weymouth elections I was shut up with him in a carriage for twenty-four hours. I ventured to ask him what was the secret of his success; his answer was, 'I resolved, when beginning to read law, to make every thing I acquired perfectly my own, and never to go to a second thing till I had entirely accomplished the first. Many of my competitors read as much in a day as I read in a week; but, at the end of twelve months, my knowledge was as fresh as on the day it was acquired, while theirs had glided away from their recollection.'

"Let the same masculine determination to act to some purpose go through your life. Do the day's work to-day. At college I was extremely intimate with two young men, both of extraordinary talents. The one was always ahead of his tutor; he was doing this year the work of next year, and, although upon many parts of the subject he knew more than his examiner, yet he contrived to answer what was actually proposed to him most scandalously; — while the other, by knowing perfectly what it was his business to know (though not confining himself to that), never, to the best of my recollection, failed to answer any question that was put to him.

"Again, be punctual. I do not mean the merely being in time for lectures, &c.; but I mean that spirit out of which punctuality grows, that love of accuracy, precision, and vigour,

which makes the efficient man; the determination that what you have to do *shall be done*, in spite of all petty obstacles, and finished off at once, and finally. I believe I have told you the story of Nelson and his coachmaker, but you must hear it once more. When he was on the eve of departure for one of his great expeditions, the coachmaker said to him, 'The carriage shall be at the door punctually at six o'clock.' 'A quarter before,' said Nelson; 'I have always been a quarter of an hour before my time, and it has made a man of me.'

"How often have I seen persons who would have done well if they would but have acted up to their own sense of duty! Thankful I am to believe that conscience is the established ruler over your actions; but I want to enlarge its province, and to make it condescend to these, which may appear to you minor matters. Have *a conscience* to be fitting yourself for life, in whatever you do, and in the management of your mind and powers. In Scripture phrase, 'Gird up the loins of your mind.' Sheridan was an example of the want of this quality. In early life he got into a grand quarrel and duel, the circumstances of which were to his credit (always excepting the fighting the duel), but they were misrepresented: he came to town, resolved to set the British public right, and as Perry, the editor of the 'Morning Chronicle,' was his friend, he resolved to do so through the channel of that paper. It was agreed between them that Sheridan, under a fictitious name, should write a history of the affair, as it had been misrepresented, and that he should subsequently reply to it in his own name, giving the facts of the case. The first part he accomplished, and there appeared in the 'Chronicle' a bitter article against him, written, in fact, by himself; but he could never find time to write the answer, and it never was written: 'The slothful man roasteth not that which he took in hunting.'

"All the men who have done things well in life have been remarkable for decision of character. Tacitus describes Julius Cæsar as 'monstrum incredibilis celeritatis atque audaciæ;' and Bonaparte, having published to all the world the day on which he should leave Paris to meet Wellington at Waterloo, did actually start on that day; but he had so arranged matters, and travelled with such expedition, that he took the British army by surprise.

"The punctuality which I desire for you involves and comprehends the exact arrangement of your time. It is a matter on which much depends; fix how much time you will spend upon each object, and adhere all but obstinately to your plan. 'Method,' says Cecil, 'is like packing things in a box; a good packer will get in half as much again as a bad one.' My letter, I see, is swelling into a sermon, but the day is fine, and Larry is waiting, so I must bring it to a close. Ponder well what I have said, and call on God to help you in arraying yourself in the qualities which I desire. If you mean to be the effective man, you must set about it earnestly, and at once. No man ever yet 'yawned it into being with a wish;' you must make arrangements for it; you must watch it; you must notice when you fail, and you must keep some kind of journal of your failures.

"But, whatever negligence may creep into your studies, or into your pursuits of pleasure or of business, let there be one point, at least, on which you are always watchful, always alive; I mean in the performance of your religious duties. Let nothing induce you, even for a day, to neglect the perusal of Scripture. You know the value of prayer; it is precious beyond all price: never, never neglect it.

"Well, my dear boy, or man if you please, if I have been somewhat hard upon you in parts of this letter, you must excuse me, remembering that few have a father so deeply and tenderly attached as you have; or one, in general, more blind to defects, or more keen-eyed in the discernment of excellencies.

"Your most affectionate friend and father,

"T. Fowell Buxton."

Mr. Buxton, as we have noticed before, and as appears in this letter, was very fond of anecdotes, both of hearing and telling them. The following were some of his parliamentary reminiscences, as taken down by one of his friends: —

Mr. Buxton.— "I was several years in Parliament with Lord Castlereagh. He had some excellent qualities for a leader, and some very much the reverse. His temper was admirable; but then in speaking he was strangely obscure, and sometimes made

the most queer blunders, so that occasionally, in the midst of a pathetic speech, he would say something which would make the whole House burst out laughing.

"Huskisson gave me a melancholy account of Castlereagh's last days. He had taken up the idea that none of his colleagues would speak to him. It made him miserable, and nothing could drive it from his mind. At length he was obliged to give a Cabinet dinner, but he was confident that none of the ministers would come, and most unhappy the idea made him. Huskisson was the first to arrive, and he was received with such extravagant warmth and cordiality as were quite incomprehensible to him. The rest came, and everything went on smoothly, till at last he counted them and said, 'There is one too few — Palmerston is not here: the others are all my private friends, but you see Palmerston won't come.' His gloom instantly returned, and he did not speak again the whole evening. A day or two after he put an end to his life. Clerk says that no man would shoot himself if he took two doses of physic beforehand; and probably if poor Castlereagh had consulted a doctor, he might have been alive now.

"Nothing ever was so delightful as to hear Canning make a fine rich poetical speech, and then Tierney pull it to pieces. But Tierney has no name, wonderful as he was. That is because he never *did* anything; but to be sure his talents were surpassing. He had the most delicate wit; everybody we hear now is coarse, blunt, and gross, compared to him. The House was extremely fond of him; let him rise when he would, it would listen to him with eagerness. He deserted his party, and joined Lord Sidmouth's government at last. It was, however, inscribed on his tomb, or proposed to be so, 'He lived without an office, and died without a debt.'

"Canning could be extremely entertaining too, but his speeches were evidently prepared and polished. He was the first man I ever heard speak in the House, and I remember asking my neighbour who he was. There was, also, when I first went into Parliament, another man of remarkable talents — Mr. Ward, afterwards Lord Dudley and Ward. He, too, finished his speeches down to the minutest comma, and he only made one or two in a year. You know the epigram upon him on its being said he was a man of no heart:

'You say Ward has no heart; but I deny it,
He has a heart — and gets his speeches by it.'

"The first time I heard Chalmers was in a chapel on the other side of the river. It was so crowded that Canning and Wilberforce had to climb in at the window. Seven years after I heard Canning make that sermon the substance of a speech on the Catholic question.

"A certain member of Parliament changed his opinions rather rapidly after losing a place in the Government. Whereupon my friend S—— quoted Lord Bacon's words, 'The two great alterants of human opinion are *time* and *place*.' 'Now,' said he, 'in this case *time* there has been none, so * * * ,' but the remainder of the sentence was drowned in the laughter and applause of the House.

"Sir Robert Peel's Currency Act is said to have enormously increased the national debt. It certainly was one of the boldest measures that have been done in our time, but probably the author of it scarcely foresaw the whole result. But it was perhaps an act of justice. When Attwood brought forward his bill for its repeal, Mr. Grote said he was like the unjust steward in the parable: 'How much owest thou? A hundred measures of oil — then take thy bill, sit down quickly, and write fifty.'

"When Peel's Currency Bill was passing, Hudson Gurney moved an amendment in which six members only supported him; of whom I was one, and Mr. Wodehouse another. Three days afterwards, however, the ministers, who had reconsidered the question, came down to the House, and carried that very amendment by a large majority. So we received the title of 'the seven wise men.'

"I lately dined in company with Sir James Scarlett. I asked him what was the secret of his pre-eminent success as an advocate. He replied, that he took care to press home the one principal point of the case, without paying much regard to the others. He also said that he knew the secret of being short. I find, said he, that when I exceed half a hour, I am always doing mischief to my client: if I drive into the heads of the jury important matter, I drive out matter more important, which I had previously lodged there."

One event of the year 1836 had been the marriage of

Mr. Buxton's eldest son to Catherine, second daughter of Mr. Samuel Gurney.

Soon afterwards, he writes to Mrs. Buxton, from Bellfield: —

"It is now five o'clock; we dine at half-past; the interval, my dearest wife, is reserved for you. I have much enjoyed being here; I went off from London very comfortably, having the coach to myself almost the whole way. I slept the first stage and the last, so I had from seven in the morning till seven at night to read and reflect, and I was very happy, and I feel very strongly, perhaps never so strongly, that mercy and goodness have followed me all the days of my life. Others may deny that there is a special Providence, but it is too barefaced a lie for me. What kept me from the brewery at fourteen, sent me to college, and made me avail myself of its advantages? What led me to Earlham. * * * What placed me in so prosperous a business, without which I never could have thought of public life? What placed me under Pratt's ministry, where my eyes were first opened to real truth; and what sent severe illness to confirm and ripen the impression made at Wheeler Chapel? What placed me in Parliament, and kept me there for nearly twenty years, in spite of almost desperate probabilities against me? What made my mother sow the seeds of abhorrence of slavery in my mind; and dear Priscilla exhort me to undertake the subject, when she was dying, and Wilberforce commit it to me, when he became unable to continue the task? I could go on till the dinner-bell to-morrow evening, recounting the instances in which I have seen the finger of a blessed and divine Providence.

"I looked yesterday and to-day, in walking through this serene place, at the present posture of our affairs, and I could see only cheering prospects, and causes of deep thankfulness. How happy this connexion of Edward's! I feel the kindness of Providence in giving me, in a new child, the very person I most like; * * * and then what confidence I have that it will be blessed! I sat still and prayed, and a loving Providence arranged it all. Then I turn to A., and P., who is rich in the things her happiness requires. If dinner would but wait, I would tell you how happy I felt about the three younger ones.

But in none have I had a greater sense of comfort and of God's mercy, than in one who, though not here to cheer us, is in the regions of perfect bliss. I can contemplate his state, and the dealings of Providence with us, as concerns him, and be very thankful, and very sure, in feeling as well as in reason, that all is right. — There goes the bell."

In his often-repeated visits to Bellfield, he showed himself in quite a new character. His uncle, who was very fond of him, and towards whom he felt like a son, treated him, to the last, as quite a young man ; and it was amusing to observe the happy mixture of deference and decision, playfulness and respect, with which his uncle's continual admonitions, especially with regard to his health, were received by one who was generally somewhat impatient of the uncalled-for interference of others.

From his numerous letters to his uncle, the following may be given :—

To Charles Buxton, Esq., Bellfield.

"Northrepps, December 31.
Eleven o'clock at Night.

"My dear Uncle,

"In the first place, as the old year is just going, I must wish that the new one may be a really happy one to you and my aunt. I hope that you both will pass through it in health and comfort. No nephew had ever more reason for this sincere wish than myself, and few nephews have so truly desired it. The termination of one year and the beginning of another is always a time of much reflection with me. I look back to the past year, and see innumerable errors and sins; and forward to the coming year, and consider that, before it terminates, I may be called to judgment. Eternity is at hand with us all. Happy they, and only they, who know that they have no merit which can save them, who look for mercy only through Christ, who repent of past sins, desire to do God's will while on earth, and believe on Christ, that he can and will save those who obey him, and trust in him. I know you are never offended by my

talking on such subjects, and they naturally spring up in my mind just as a new year is coming."

He was at all times deeply anxious for the religious interests of those with whom he was in any way connected, and occasionally he felt it his duty to express his opinions to them on the subject. The following letter was thus addressed to a friend, much his senior; and it is evident that nothing but strong conscientious feeling could have induced him to write it:—

"I am persuaded you will forgive me for saying to you what has been upon my mind for some time. I have very much wished to have some conversation with you on religious subjects, but from various causes, chiefly, perhaps, my own want of courage, I have hitherto left you without unburthening my mind of the few things I wished to say. As you were, however, so kind as to say that the hint I dropped was not lost upon you, and that you had of late read through the New Testament more than once, I must venture to add something to that hint. I trust, then, that the great and capital truth of Christianity is always before your mind, viz. that there is salvation in no other way than through the atonement of Christ. The whole New Testament is a declaration that in ourselves we are sinful, and deserving nothing but condemnation; but that the Son of God bore the punishment of our offences, and that, by his merits, those who believe on him are delivered. Faith, then, in Christ is all in all. With it, however guilty we may have been, we shall be safe; and without it, no virtue, no moral excellence, nothing in the shape of meritorious works, will suffice. You will find the New Testament full of these two simple but all-important doctrines, viz. our sinfulness, and salvation through Christ; and he who knows them, knows almost all that is essential. But then, those only who believe in Christ shall have the benefit of the pardon and reconciliation which he came from heaven to obtain for us. 'No man cometh unto the Father but by me.'—John xiv. 6. St. Paul has explained his faith in Philippians iii. 7, 8, 9; and in Titus ii. 11-14: 'There is none other name given among men, whereby we may be saved, but that of Christ alone.' 'What must I do to be saved?' said the

gaoler to the Apostles: Acts xvi. 30. The plain unequivocal answer is, 'Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved.' It would be easy to multiply texts to the same effect, for Scripture is full of them. Faith in Christ, then, as the Son of God, and as delivering us from our sins, being essential, how is it to be obtained? It is to be obtained only through the influence of the Holy Spirit; and it is said, over and over again, that if we pray for the Holy Spirit, it will be given us; that is the promise: Luke xi. 13. Then comes the point which I venture to urge, prayer to God for the Holy Spirit to teach us all the truths essential to our salvation; to reveal Christ to our understandings, to impart to us that holiness which is required of his disciples, to give us true repentance, and to prepare us for the day of judgment. I am persuaded you will forgive me for thus unburthening my mind. It is some effort to me to do so, and I am sure you will ascribe it to its true motive."

As usual, the year was closed by him with an enumeration of the mercies received during its course. To his list of domestic blessings, he now adds his little grandson, who, he says, "is a source of delight, and infinite amusement."

He proceeds:—

"The accounts from the West Indies of the conduct of our negroes are gratifying in the last degree; so that that subject which for eleven years was a source of daily disquietude, is now the refreshment and solace to which I continually turn. The history of the past year is of favours heaped upon me and mine, on the right hand and on the left."

After expressing his earnest desire that the Lord might be with him in every public duty (enumerating "the Report about the Aborigines; all that relates to the negroes; the Apprenticeship Committee; the Mico fund; our speeches, and all our doings"), he adds:—

* * * * *

"Guide me aright in all that I may say or do about the Church questions, and let me take no part which shall impair the real efficiency of that which I am sure I love and admire.

"Bless my little grandson, * * * my brothers, sisters, and dear friends, and myself also, with the best of blessings, for 'Christ's sake.

"'Thou hast given me a goodly heritage,' is the language which I ought continually to be using. In what respect have I not been bountifully dealt with? Especially in having pursuits in life so deeply interesting as they proceed, and so full of promise as to the vast importance of their results, that they may well satisfy my whole mind? I would not change objects with any man."

The following description of Mr. Buxton's appearance and manner at this period of his life is from the pen of the Rev. John Richards, long a valued inmate of his family:—

"I shall never forget my first interview with your father. I had been passing the night at Ham House, where he was expected by an early coach from Norfolk. We were already seated at the breakfast-table, when his arrival was announced, and in he walked, stooping as he passed beneath the door-way, and then drawing himself up to the full height of his commanding form. My thoughts had been previously busy portraying the image of one with whom I was to be brought into such close contact, and that, as you may suppose, with an interest which excited me; but, as he stood dilated before me, though his frame was not so firmly knit together as to convey the idea of robust strength, the real impression was certainly one of *awe*. This feeling, however, soon subsided on witnessing the joyous hilarity with which he returned the greetings of his nieces, or if it recurred for a moment when, on being presented to him, he surveyed me with a somewhat scrutinising look, it was at once completely dispelled by the warmth of his welcome and the kindness of his manner; and I was not long in discovering, from the playful sallies and affectionate tones of his conversation, that within that manly form there glowed the sensitive heart of a child."

CHAPTER XXV.

1837, 1838.

ABORIGINES REPORT. — CORRESPONDENCE. — ELECTION. — DEFEAT AT WEYMOUTH. — LETTERS. — EFFORTS TO SHORTEN THE APPRENTICESHIP OF THE NEGROES. — MR. BUXTON'S HESITATION. — THE APPRENTICESHIP ABOLISHED.

With the session of 1836 had closed the sitting of the Aborigines Committee, and the drawing up of its report was entrusted to Mr. Buxton as its chairman. He was anxious to render this report a sort of manual for the future treatment of aboriginal nations in connection with our colonies. Accordingly, in January, 1837, he invited Dr. Philip to Northrepps, and commenced his work.

"Dr. Philip has been here three days," he writes. "We are in the heart of the Report on Aborigines. Oh! for a spirit of wisdom poured down on our labours!"

The object of the report was to prove, first, the destructive cruelty to which the native tribes had generally been subjected; and, secondly, that, wherever they had received equitable and humane treatment, they had increased in numbers, acquired the arts of civilised life, and accepted the blessings of religion.

"April 2. 1837.

"The next few months are very important, as in them the Aborigines Report will be settled. Most earnestly I pray that it may stop the oppressor, and open the door for the admission of multitudes of heathens to the fold of Christ.

"Then there is the Apprenticeship Committee, which I bring forward on the 20th; and the slave trade question, and East

Indian slavery; and other deep and various interests which will speedily be unfolded. Grant, O Lord of mercy, that in all I have to do I may be steered by thee; that each event may be fraught with mercy; that the influence of thy grace may operate more directly and more forcibly on my heart than it has hitherto done; that thy blessing may reside with my family, my friends, and my fellow-workers; with the Aborigines, the West Indies, Africa, India; and if I have offended, forgive me, or at least shield me from the dreadful punishment. Cast me not away from thy presence, and take not thy Holy Spirit from me.

"I must confess I look back without much sense of satisfaction to my course on the English Church-rate Bill. I did desire and pray to be guided aright; but yet I have a lurking suspicion that secondary motives did, in some measure, bias my judgment. If it were so, I beseech thy forgiveness, O Lord, and pray that in future nothing may influence me, or turn me aside from what is my duty to thee."

Many of his papers and letters at this period are full of expressions of those grateful feelings to which his heart had always been disposed, but which seem to have risen higher and higher after the great purpose of his life, the abolition of slavery, had been achieved. In this strain, he writes from Northrepps to one of his children: —

"May 14. 1837.

"* * * I dwelt much yesterday, and still more to-day, on the mercy which has been showered upon me by a gracious and indulgent Lord. I feel that I cannot be grateful enough for the heaps and loads of mercies which have been my lot since my marriage thirty years ago. * * * *That* may fairly stand among earthly blessings as number one.

* * * * *

"Then my success in business, so good and so untroublesome, my seat in Parliament for nineteen years, and the objects which have been entrusted to me. * * * My children, my brothers and sisters, my friends; the success which has crowned my public labours. These are a few, and but a few, of my sources of grateful satisfaction.

"My cup runneth over: surely goodness and mercy have followed me all the days of my life, and (may it be!) I shall dwell in the house of the Lord for ever.

"Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits (and every clause in that catalogue of mercies, each of which has been offered for my acceptance). He maketh me to lie down in green pastures.

"Farewell! Farewell! I must go and hear the birds sing, and turn my eyes to the Wonderful Giver of such stores of mercies."

During this session he was chiefly occupied in completing and carrying through the committee the report on the treatment of Aborigines, which had been drawn up with so much care at Northrepps. Before it was printed it was carefully revised by Sir George Grey, and it appears to have had considerable weight with the Government in promoting the equitable treatment of the natives in our colonial dominions.

It was with peculiar satisfaction that he saw this work completed, for it was very doubtful whether he would long have the opportunity of continuing his exertions in the House of Commons. The death of the King, on the 20th of June, produced an immediate dissolution of Parliament, and Mr. Buxton's return for Weymouth had never before appeared so insecure.

On account of his health he had felt serious doubts as to standing again, and he had been advised by many to withdraw, at least for a time; but he was not willing to take the responsibility of leaving his post. "I am of opinion," he writes, "that I ought to remain in Parliament, even at a vast sacrifice."

To Charles Buxton, Esq., Bellfield.

"My dear Uncle, "Spitalfields, 1837.

"You must not be alarmed about the election. * * * I really think I should not be happy, or feel that I had done my

duty, if I were to retire. I think (though, perhaps, it is absurd vanity to say so) that my being in Parliament is of some little consequence to the negroes in the West Indies, to the oppressed natives of our colonies, and to the inhabitants of Africa, exposed to the slave trade. As the first are nearly one million, the second three millions, and the third a great many millions, it would not be right to give up a chance, if it were only a chance, of being returned, merely because there may be some little humiliation to myself in being turned out.

"I don't care a straw about the disgrace. If I am turned out, I cannot help it: I have done my best, and I shall be satisfied. But if I were to go out of my own accord, I think my conscience would reproach me. Besides all which, I do not think they can turn me out quite so easily as they imagine."

The following letter was addressed to Mr. Joseph John Gurney, who was about to proceed to America, on a religious visit to the Society of Friends: —

"Upton, June 25. 1837.

"I think it is hardly possible for any one, at least of our harder sex, to feel more than I do in all that concerns your going to America. We have been bound together for not far short of forty years, in one cloudless friendship. As boy and man, I have been partner in all your fortunes, and you in mine. I do not believe you ever, by word or deed, gave me a momentary vexation. You, I dare say, are not aware how you have refreshed and encouraged me in my career; in truth, I look to you with almost boundless affection and gratitude. It is against the grain with me to let you go without seeing you again, but I fear it must be so. After much deliberation I have resolved to go down to Weymouth. The way in which Parliament affects my health has had great weight in the one scale, but in the other there are three great points — West India negroes, East India slavery, and the Brazilian slave trade. If it were the West India negroes alone, I believe I should retire, because nine-tenths of the work is done, and because there is feeling enough in the country to accomplish the remainder, and persons enough willing and able to call forth that feeling. I am steadfast in the belief, that that great experiment has been,

and will continue to be, crowned with more complete success than the most sanguine among us anticipated. I know very well that evil influences are working hard against it, and that thousands of the negroes are exposed to cruel injustice. Nevertheless I do rejoice, and will rejoice, in the extinction of slavery; and the more I see of the posthumous brood, the more I rejoice in the death of the old parent dragon.

"And now, my dear brother, if I do not see you before your departure, I take leave of you with a heart full of love, with the most pleasant and grateful remembrance of you, and with the most earnest prayers for your safety, comfort, and peace, for the full success of your mission, and for your fruition of all that is contained in these words — 'Fear thou not, for I am with thee; be not dismayed, for I am thy God. I will strengthen thee, yea, I will help thee, yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness.'"

On the day that the Queen dissolved Parliament, he writes to Mrs. S. Gurney, whose aged mother he had visited on the previous day: —

"My dear Elizabeth, "July 17. 1837.

"I this day saw our youthful Queen surrounded by all the chiefs officers of state, herself wearing a crown of diamonds, and arrayed in royal robes, and the House of Lords filled with all the great ones of the country. She delivered an admirable address to the Parliament, with the utmost sweetness of voice, and the most exquisite grace of manner; and yet this spectacle has left a less pleasing, a less lively impression on my mind than the sight which I had yesterday the pleasure of witnessing, — of an aged Christian, refined and purified, her work completed, waiting in patient cheerfulness the will of her Lord. That is a sight full of instruction and consolation. So much must I say, my dear sister, and you may repeat it to her who is ready to depart and to be with Christ."

In July he went down to the election at Weymouth. After mentioning to his eldest son the difficulties into which he had been thrown by the non-appearance of the other Whig candidate, he adds: —

"If Burdon does not stand, I think it all but certain I shall lose the election. After hearing, on my arrival last night, all the particulars I have given you, I felt so perfectly satisfied, and so devoid of a momentary feeling of regret, that I am confident I shall be very thankful if I am turned out. *Per contra*, I am equally confident I shall be very thankful if I am once more turned loose in the House against slavery, slave trade, and white men's cruelties. So I am pretty sure to get a triumph. Love to C ——, and my smiling namesake."

To Mrs. Buxton.

"Bellfield, July 25. 1837.

"Here I am looking out on this splendid view; nothing can be more calm. I have passed a restless night, and have been awake for hours.

"This day will, I expect, make an entire revolution in my vocation. I have no expectation of being returned. When I look at some of the arts that have been employed, I am half ready to be provoked; but when I turn to the Creator of these fields, and those waters, and remember that all events are in His hands, that nothing occurs but at His bidding, I am restored to full peace. He ordereth all events, and that is reason enough for satisfaction; and though, for the moment, we are carried away by the current, it is not very difficult to perceive that we shall derive a hundred family benefits from my exclusion from Parliament. I look upon myself as an old horse turned out to grass, and it is folly to worry myself by supposing that other and better steeds will not be found to do the work.

"I must now get ready. I do not expect to be in any way disturbed by the events of the day; but before it closes I shall be a man of leisure; that is no mean blessing: a man not slaving himself to death, but with time to walk, to read, to sleep, to reflect,—and better than these, time to pray.

"One o'clock.—Well, my dearest wife, your wishes are realised: the troubles and worries of Parliament are over with me; and now we must be as happy, as healthy, and as long-lived as possible. I am perfectly well satisfied with the result, and view it as a release from a vast deal of labour."

That the cause of this defeat was not any diminution

of personal attachment to him on the part of his constituents, was evident from the strong expressions of grief on all sides at his rejection. But the Tory party had for some years been increasing in local influence, and did not scruple to employ a degree of intimidation till then unknown in the borough. In Mr. Buxton's farewell address to the electors, he distinctly states: —

"During twenty years in elections, seven of which have been severely contested, I have had the opportunity of ascertaining the motives which actuate almost every individual in this borough, and I gladly state this fact, so honourable to the poorer electors of this town, viz. that I never paid any man one sixpence for his vote, and never, except in two instances, was asked to do so."

An incident which occurred is recorded by one who was present at this election: —

"It strongly illustrates," says the narrator, "the deep personal interest which Mr. Buxton had the power of exciting among those who knew him best. Captain Penny, R.N., had long been one of the active men on Mr. Buxton's committees: he was an old man, exceeding ninety-two. The contest was virtually over by one o'clock, though the poll remained open till four o'clock. Shortly before its close the gallant veteran inquired how it stood, and on hearing of the increasing majority against Mr. Buxton, he called for his hat, and declaring to his wife that 'if it were to be the last act of his life it would be a good one,' he proceeded to the polling booth, and voted for Mr. Buxton and Mr. G. Stephen. He then went home, but had been much fatigued by the exertion, and shortly after reaching home asked his wife to help him to bed. She assisted him up stairs, and began to undress him, as he was seated on the side of the bed. She took off one of his stockings, and told him, to raise his other foot, that she might draw off the other. He did not do so; and being on her knees, she looked up to him, to repeat her request, when, to her amazement, she perceived that he was actually sitting erect, but a corpse! So his voting for Mr. Buxton *was* the last act of his life."

To Joseph John Gurney, Esq., in America,

"My dear Brother, "Upton, July 30. 1837.

"We have gone so much hand-in-hand together all our days, that I greatly miss you now that a change has taken place with me. I am reprieved from death, and emancipated from slavery; and both these blessings came under the form of a dismissal from Weymouth on Tuesday last. But you shall have my history for the last fortnight, at least as much of it as I can remember.

"You know, I believe, that a few days before the session closed I presented our report on the Aborigines. It is a fair compendium of the evidence given before the committee during three years, and as I had but a small portion of the merit of drawing it up, I may be allowed to call it an admirable document; and I have little doubt it will go far to check that desperate and wide-spreading villany which has rendered the intercourse of the civilised and Christian man with the savage little else than one uniform system of cruelty, rapacity, and murder. In short, I am well satisfied, and have little more to say on that subject. Two or three days before the session closed, I brought before the House briefly the questions of the slave trade, East India slavery, and the transportation of the Coolies from India to the Mauritius and the West Indies.

"But now for my personal history. On Monday, the 17th of July, the Queen dissolved the Parliament. Before her messenger gave his three taps at our door I gave notice of a motion on East Indian slavery for next session. We were then called before her Majesty. She looked well and quite composed; in delivering her speech her voice was sweet and clear almost to perfection. In that great room, with the multitude of people and some bustle, every syllable was so distinctly articulated as to be perfectly heard; and her voice rose into suitable emphasis when she said, that her reign was auspiciously begun by giving her assent to the mitigation of the Criminal Law.

"Thus, a second time, I have been drawn away from my history, but these things may interest you, and I shall not have anything to tell you of queens and parliaments for one while. But now to my history in earnest.

"Before I went down to Weymouth, I began to fear; for one of my supporters told me that, if I wished to secure the election,

it would be necessary to open public houses and to lend money (a gentle name for bribery), to the extent of 1000*l.* I of course declined. It might or it might not be my duty to get into Parliament, but it could not be my duty to corrupt the electors by beer and bank notes.

"At ten o'clock on the day of nomination, out came Burdon's address resigning the contest. George Stephen happened to arrive by the mail at half-past ten,—unshaven, unbreakfasted, we converted him into a candidate. The Tories had hired a stout mob from the adjacent country, and as they kept the beer going, our audience was rather of the noisiest. It seemed to me that I could not be heard; but I find I was distinctly. * * * On the 25th the polling began awkwardly. My friends were desperately intimidated. One of them spoke out the real state of the case. When asked at the booth how he voted, he replied, 'One for Buxton on principle; one for Villiers on interest.' In the middle of the day I found the affair was hopeless, and ceased to press my voters to come forward.

"* * * As to my worthy colleague, Mr. Burdon, I cannot prove that he sold me; but I am sure that if he had done so, he could not have taken more skilful measures to effect my expulsion.

"At the close of the poll I went with Edward to the booth, where my opponents and their friends were collected, shook hands with them, wished them joy, walked about the town for half an hour with Barlow and Edward to cheer up my friends, who were sadly out of spirits, and then went to Bellfield, where we passed a very cheerful evening; and, up to this moment, not one shade of regret on my own account, however slight, however transient, has passed over my mind, at the memory of my departed honours.

"The next morning, about eighty of my constituents came up. I ran to the balcony and began a cheerful speech; but I soon found I was entirely out of tune. I went down amongst them, and then made them an oration. It could not help being a feeling one; certainly I never saw a greater appearance of regret. * * * I have not half described the manifestation of feeling which took place in the town. The children set themselves to work to collect subscriptions to give me a piece of plate. The men are also doing the same thing on their part. The very

Tories, they say, are disconsolate! In the evening, several of the working men who had not joined the procession in the morning, came up to bid me farewell; and at six o'clock the next morning, when I got into the coach, there was an assemblage of them looking sadly downcast. Spite of all this lamentation, I have been in great glee the whole time. I am right glad that I stood — right glad that I have got a holiday. My own impression is, that I could not have stood the fatigues of Parliament many sessions more; and perhaps this turning out to grass may, in the long run, enable me to do more work, if I should have the privilege of being called to it. I saw ——, who said more about the regret of Government, than I should like to repeat. On the other hand, Dr. Holland has sent me a message by Samuel Hoare, of warm congratulation.

"I had fully resolved, had I continued in Parliament, to have sent you a kind of journal of notable events; but in my present non-effective condition, I am not likely to have any thing more interesting to tell you, than the history of the pigs and poultry at Northrepps. As I leave Parliament for health, I do not by any means intend to defeat that end by dedicating myself to any other objects. I mean, for conscience' sake, to ride, shoot, amuse myself, and grow fat and flourishing."

He soon afterwards went to Weymouth, to receive from his friends there two pieces of plate; the one, a candelabrum from his late constituents; the other, which, as he said, pleased him, if possible, still more, a silver snuff-box from their children. He was exceedingly gratified by these testimonials of regard from the place with which he had so long been connected, and few of his possessions were valued so highly.

From no less than twenty-seven different places were proposals made to Mr. Buxton to stand as a candidate; but he felt at liberty to take advantage of the opportune repose afforded him, and accordingly declined them all.

On returning from a short visit to Scotland, he writes to Mrs. Johnston at Rennyhill.

"Northrepps Hall, Oct. 7. 1837.

"I have just been debating on this difficult question — shall I write to Rennyhill, or stretch myself on the sofa? — you see how I have decided.

"Our return home is vastly pleasant, and I hope we feel something of true thankfulness at being permitted to reassemble — none missing, none injured, and many benefited. * * * My week in London was anything but idle. I got through my fifty-six memoranda. We resolved that Mr. Trew should, without delay, provide thirty-four first-rate teachers for the colonies. Only think of sending forth such a troop! Is it not cheering? Whilst I was in London, three separate deputations called upon me on the same morning, to urge me to go into Parliament. They were very philosophic on the subject of my health, and said *in substance* that it was good economy for them to work me up now, and that when I was fairly dead, they dared to say they should find some other agent; but I was steadfast against this kind of argument."

To Charles Buxton, Esq., at Bellfield.

"October, 1837.

"I take shooting very easy this year, having always a shooting pony with me; he is a wonder, has as good action as your old leader, and is as handsome; as quiet as a lamb, and strong enough to carry, and sometimes does carry, Mr. Hoare and myself together, eats bread and cheese, drinks beer, is a particularly good judge of porter, and prefers ours."

To Edward N. Buxton, Esq.

"November, 1837.

"I have again made an alteration in my gun-stock, contrary to your advice. I have shot execrably all the year, and could stand it no longer, so I employed a Holt carpenter to hew me a stock, according to my own fancy, out of the trunk of a tree. It is in its primitive simplicity, and is so wide as to 'contrive the double debt to pay,' of stock while shooting, and table at luncheon; but rough and awkward as it is, I shall, I trust, take the conceit out of the young men with it.

"I have been calculating that since Parliament closed I have ridden 500 miles, and walked 1500.

"'Better to hunt in fields for health unbought,
Than fee the doctor for a nauseous draught;
The wise, for cure, on exercise depend.'

"So sings Dryden, and what he preached I practise.

"I shall send you a basket to-night, as proof that my log of a gun-stock can do execution. * * * We are very happy here. If you catch the influenza, lie up at once—*principiis obsta.*"

At the end of 1837 a work was published by Messrs. Sturge and Scoble, who had visited the West Indies, describing the condition of the negro apprentices, and such general indignation was excited by their narrative, that from all parts of the country were delegates sent to London in the beginning of 1838, to urge the discontinuance of the apprenticeship system. Mr. Buxton, for some time, refused to join them, and he thus states his reasons in a letter to G. W. Alexander, Esq.:—

"February 5. 1838.

"I have received your very kind letter, and have given the subject of it my very best consideration. The result is that my opinions, as expressed in my letter to the delegates, yet remain unchanged. I thought, and continue to think, that the attempt to overthrow the apprenticeship will be fruitless, while there is another object to be accomplished, viz. that of securing to the negro the full and entire liberty of a British subject in 1840, which is at once more important, and far more practicable.

"I am afraid that this main and capital object should in some degree be lost sight of, by the peculiar prominence that is given to the abolition of the apprenticeship, and I could not attend any meeting without stating my doubts as to the policy of the present movement. I am, however, far from wishing to give circulation to these doubts. It is very possible that I may be altogether mistaken in the views I entertain; and I should be extremely sorry to weaken the probability, small as I consider it, of Parliament consenting to the immediate abolition of the apprenticeship. I apprehend, therefore, that I should best serve the cause of the negro by abstaining from attending your meeting. It is needless for me to add, that it is with hearty regret I cannot on this

occasion altogether unite with those good and zealous men with whom I have so long acted."

His refusal to attend the meeting excited great displeasure among those who were bent on breaking down the apprenticeship. After alluding to the severe censures to which he had been exposed, he proceeds: —

"Well, after all this, I am in excellent health and spirits, not the least chagrined. I do not repent of any step I have taken in this business."

He writes, during a short visit to London, to Mrs. Johnston: —

"It only wants a few minutes to breakfast, but there is time for a scrap of a letter to you. First, be it known to you, and to all the Northrepps party, that I am quite well, and in excellent spirits, and instead of being worried by my adventures, only amused and interested by them. I left Northrepps on Monday at four o'clock in the morning, and as it was too dark to read, I occupied a good part of the way in composing a mighty grand oration, intended for the delegates. The horses flew; but the time flew still faster, and I was almost surprised to find, after two hours, that the town I entered was not Aylsham, but Norwich; full half an hour too soon for the coach. Conceive me then in the kitchen, writing down my notes on the dresser. Off I was taken before I had half done, and had to finish my notations in the coach. I then had to read a budget of letters from Floresi, and to make sundry resolutions on them. Then Lord Bacon, in the Edinburgh Review; have you read it? Pray do, though it is very sad. After doing so, you must, when quoting the line—

'The greatest, wisest, meanest of mankind,'

lay all the emphasis on the last epithet. With this, varied by other books, and stages given up to a kind of meditation, I cheated the journey of everything like tediousness, and reached Ham House to dinner. S. Gurney soon told me that perhaps it would be as well that I should attend the public meeting, as he found that the current ran strongly against me, and that pains had been taken to poison the minds of simple-hearted Friends, with the suspicion that I had become a kind of enemy

to the anti-slavery cause. I called a meeting of our society on Tuesday, which I attended, and I asked their opinion of the propriety of my going to Exeter Hall. The general opinion was against it; and I decided not to go. Soon afterwards I was called out of the room by Dr. Philip and Josiah Forster, to tell me that a reaction had taken place; that a public breakfast had been given the day before by the delegates to the anti-slaveryites in the neighbourhood of town, where my conduct was the chief subject of discussion. At length my old friend Capt. Stewart proposed a resolution, condemning, though in gentle terms, more in sorrow than in anger, my letter. For some time no seconder could be found, but when at last one appeared, Dr. Philip made them a speech. He first said he owed everything to me; but for me he would have been trampled to the earth, would have been tried as a traitor, and convicted; that but for me the whole of Caffreland would have been Adelaide country, and the whole Caffre nation exterminated; but for me not one missionary left in all South Africa: that they owed all anti-slavery success, including the present force of public opinion, the very groundwork on which they stood, to me. This oration was received with great applause; the seconder vowed he would second no such nonsense as Stewart proposed. Stewart would move no such motion, and these three curiosities occurred:— First, instead of a lecture, they unanimously voted me thanks; secondly, G. Thompson offered to draw it up; thirdly, Sturge begged that he might be allowed to present it. He did so the following day, and we parted the best of friends. * * * I long now to return to the 'fairy land of snowdrops.' I am very well, but I cannot sleep. As Milton says—

'What has night to do with sleep?'

I affronted E. W——, by not calling her at three o'clock this morning to read to me, but I could not do anything so barbarous. I have less pity on poor Andrew, who is most useful to me in various ways."

As the spring advanced, he found that he had been in error, and that public feeling was less torpid than he had expected. He writes, on the 12th of March, to one of his old Anti-slavery coadjutors:—"It seems just pos-

sible that the delegates may succeed, and if so I am sure we shall both say, 'thank God that other people had more courage and more discernment than ourselves.'"

On the 23rd of March he received a letter from Dr. Lushington, urging him to come to town and meet the delegates, and he accordingly left Northrepps for London, and after much deliberation he determined to join them.

"I went," he says, "to the meeting of the delegates; they were very cordial. I told them freely my mind, and some of it was not much to their liking, I dare say. Among the rest, that I praised Glenelg."

After mentioning the charge of inconsistency which he might occur, he adds,—

"No matter. The sin unpardonable in my eyes would be, to do anything for any consideration whatever, the result of which was likely to injure the sacred cause. So long as I retain the assurance, that I am acting with a single eye to that, you may be sure I shall not be dejected."

"You ask, what will the world say?" he writes to another friend. "Let the world say what it pleases:

> 'Tis not the babbling of a busy world,
> Where praise and censure are at random hurled,
> Which can the meanest of my thoughts control,
> Or shake one settled purpose of my soul:—
> Free and at large, may their wild censures roam,
> While all,—while all, I know, is right at home.'"

On the 30th of March, Sir George Strickland brought forward a motion for the abolition of the apprenticeship, but it was lost by a majority of 64. Mr. Buxton thus describes the evening, having been present under the gallery:—

"London, March 31. 1838.

"I am alive, after having been in the detestable position of having to sit for ten hours, last night, in the House of Commons, to be shot at by everybody, without the possibility of firing one

round in return. I would have given something to be allowed to speak, and I literally was two or three times upon the point of springing up. Gladstone, Lord John Russell, Grey, &c., would have it that I was a friend to the apprenticeship, because I sold an unavailing division on it, in Committee, for the solid profit of getting them to insert a clause for unqualified freedom, when the apprenticeship should cease."

In consequence of what had been stated in this debate, Mr. Buxton addressed a letter to Lord John Russell, in which he proved that he had been throughout a steady opponent of the apprenticeship system.

He went, about the same time, to see Mr. Macaulay, whom he found very ill. "God bless you and yours," said his aged friend. "I sympathise in all your trials, I concur in all your opinions, and your visits to me are as water to the thirsty soul." It was his impression that he should not see Mr. Buxton again; nor did he. He died in May, just before the complete consummation of all his labours, for, in the same month, Sir Eardley Wilmot gained, by a majority of three, a motion against the Apprenticeship; and the planters afterwards agreed to surrender it on the 1st of August, 1838. "The Apprenticeship is abolished," writes Mr. Buxton; "thank God for that."

"I bless God for the event," he says in a letter to Mr. Sturge: "I bless God, that He, who has always raised up agents such as the crisis required, sent you to the West Indies. I bless God that, during the Apprenticeship, not one act of violence against the person of a white man has, as I believe, been perpetrated by a negro; and I cannot express my grateful exultation, that those whom the colonial law so recently reckoned as brute beasts, 'the fee simple absolute whereof resided in their owners,' will so soon be invested with the full rights of man. * * * Let none of us forget that those who are emancipated will be assailed with many an attempt to curb and crush their liberty; nor that two millions of human chattels

in the East Indies require our protection; nor that the slave trade, of all evils the monster evil, still defiles and darkens one quarter of the globe. May that same public voice, which has now been so happily exerted, and under the influence of that same gracious Lord, who has wrought its present victory, never be hushed while a taint of slavery remains!"

To the Hon. Mrs. Upcher.

"Athenæum, May 23. 1838.

"I must write a line to tell you that Sturge and that party, whom we thought all in the wrong, are proved to be all in the right. A resolution for the immediate abolition of the Apprenticeship was carried by a majority of three last night. The intelligence was received with such a shout by the Quakers, (myself among the number,) that we strangers were all turned out for rioting! I am right pleased."

CHAPTER XXVI.

1838.

NEW PLAN FOR THE SUPPRESSION OF THE SLAVE TRADE. — LABORIOUS INVESTIGATIONS. — COLLECTION OF EVIDENCE. — LETTER TO LORD MELBOURNE. — COMMUNICATIONS WITH THE GOVERNMENT. — ABSTRACT OF HIS VIEWS. — HORRORS OF THE TRADE. — CAPABILITIES OF AFRICA.

On quitting Parliament, Mr. Buxton had looked forward to a period of repose; but this expectation was not realised. Even before that time, an idea had suggested itself to his mind, the development of which proved more than sufficient occupation for all his remaining years.

"I well remember," writes one of his sons, "the commencement of that long train of toils, anxieties, and sorrows. While my father and I were staying at Earlham, in the beginning of the summer of 1837, he walked into my room one morning, at an early hour, and sitting down on my bedside, told me that he had been lying awake the whole night, reflecting on the subject of the slave trade, and that he believed he had hit upon the true remedy for that portentous evil."

Two years before this time, he had moved an address for making our treaties on this subject with foreign powers more stringent, and the penalties of the crime more severe. The idea that now struck him so forcibly was this — that "though strong external measures ought still to be resorted to, the deliverance of Africa was to be effected, *by calling out her own resources.*"

For some months he was compelled to defer the following up of this new train of thought; but on reaching

home at the fall of the year, he addressed himself to the pursuit with all his heart and mind, and never was his character shown more clearly than in his conduct of this great affair. The exquisite sympathy with suffering, the long investigations and deep thought before action, the intense and untiring energy when the work had once begun, the largeness of his plan, the care bestowed upon its smallest details, the hearty trust in Providence, joined with the solicitous choice of means, the patient faith with which disappointment and calamity were borne; — all these qualities had been apparent in his previous undertakings, — all now stood forth in still bolder relief. Nor was there less of the same ardent and exclusive devotion to the one work before him, which had characterised his earlier years. The idea did not flash upon him, and then slowly fade away again, like the visions of less effective men. Nor was he content merely to lay his views before the public, satisfying himself with an undefined hope that some one else would carry them into practice. He at once applied himself to the subject, and throughout the winter he was incessantly revolving it in his mind, reading every book that could assist him, and inquiring wherever information could be gained, until at length the whole idea was fully developed in his mind.

His task was twofold: — on the one hand he had to prove the magnitude of the evils now existing, in the human traffic, and consequent condition of Africa: — on the other, he had to point out the capabilities of Africa, and thence to deduce the possibility of her becoming peaceful, flourishing, and productive, by the force of legitimate commerce.

While he himself was occupied in elaborate calculations drawn from official documents, respecting the

extent and desolating effect of the trade, he set others to work in collecting proofs of the productiveness and commercial resources of Africa.

To Edward N. Buxton, Esq.

"Northrepps Hall, 1838.

"Andrew Johnston and I are working like dragons at the slave trade—a task as interesting in its prosecution, and promising to be as important in its results, as any that I ever had the honour to be engaged in. I only wish that the number of the hours in each day were doubled, and the number of minutes in every hour quadrupled."

To John Jeremie, Esq., in Ceylon.

"My dear Jeremie, "Northrepps Hall, February 27.

"I wonder that I have not written to you long ere this, and especially that I have not answered your very welcome letter of the 14th of August last. But procrastination, always an insidious enemy, makes foreign letters its especial prey. They may perhaps sail as soon, if written next week, as if sent off to-day, and therefore are postponed; and I have no lack of good excuses. Though perhaps I ought to be at leisure, now that I am released from the harness of Parliament, I still find every day more than supplied with its work. Your long letter I have not now before me, as I left it with Dr. Lushington. He has promised to read it attentively, although as usual overwhelmed with business.

"My principal occupation is the consideration of the slave trade. I am quite convinced we are all on a wrong tack about it, and that we never shall do good, or at least effectual good, by pursuing only our present plan. The scheme therefore that I am now meditating is, to represent to all powers the immense field for commerce, which is closed by the slave trade. When I am thoroughly master of the subject, I shall lay it before the Government.

"You will not doubt, my dear friend, that all you tell me about yourself and your own state of mind is very interesting to me. I do indeed trust that you may more and more taste of the knowledge of that which can, above all else, *satisfy the mind and heart*, and lead into the way of peace. What I have learnt of this, has been at the price of heavy sorrow; but I can say it

is worth its price, and it is my chief and settled desire for myself, and all who are most dear to me, that, above all prosperity, all knowledge, all success or honour, we may know and partake of the riches of Christianity. By this I do not merely mean morality, even of the highest tone; I mean the knowledge of Christ as a Saviour, which knowledge brings the heart to humility, love, gratitude, and all that is good, as well as all that is happy. I can desire nothing better for you, my dear friend, than that you and yours may be led on and taught the fulness of these things, of which we may all know more and more!"

To a Friend, a Member of Parliament.

"Northrepps Hall, February, 1838.

"I was much pleased with your warm invitation to St. Stephen's, but you must, if you please, excuse me. In the first place, I have no wish to come in till 1840, when I should like to see what you are after; and, in the second, there is no constituency in the world that I should dislike so much as that of Marylebone, as I have not even a morsel of Radicalism about me. I should, I confess, like to be in Parliament on the 6th of March, in order to state my opinion about Lord Glenelg. Could I say that he wanted energy? The delivery of the Caffres and their territory from the hands of their enemies, was a measure which required as much good principle, as much steady determination and as much wise foresight, as any other in my memory. I ought to know something of colonial secretaries, for I have worried each of them in succession, for twenty years. I have a very high opinion of Sir George Murray, Lord Goderich, Spring Rice, and Lord Aberdeen, and for some of them I feel the most grateful affection; but there is not one of them who, in my estimation, has acted more conscientiously, or of whose anxiety to do justice to negroes, Caffres, Hottentots, and Indians, I feel more assurance, than Lord Glenelg. Of course you will not consider me as approving of the whole of his policy; nevertheless, for the sake of the weak and the oppressed, I earnestly hope that he may long continue colonial minister."

To Miss Gurney, Northrepps Cottage.

"Hampstead, April 28.

"I can't say how mean I appear to myself for not having acknowledged the paper on African commerce. Acknowledged

it I have a hundred times, but never in a letter to you. You do not know, nor did I till two days ago, how important it is. I now find that either the observations, which I made in a conversation with Lord Palmerston some time ago, or which is much more likely to be the case, his own wit, has led him to the same conclusion as my own, viz. that the slave trade is to be abolished by legitimate trade. If this be so, our commercial speculations come just at the right time. They will exactly hit the mark, and they will operate upon the Government at large; and I do believe that your labours could not have been better employed. I am more hard run than I used to be, even in Parliament."

Having come to London prepared with all his statistical details, he spent the spring, assisted by Mr. Johnston, in verifying them by evidence of first-rate authority, both naval and mercantile. When he had done this, he laid an epitome of his plans before different members of the Cabinet, by several of whom a disposition was evinced to investigate the subject further; and he was requested to prepare his views in a more developed form by the beginning of the recess. Accordingly, at the end of May, he went to Leamington, where he was joined by Mr. Scoble, an able and hearty fellow-labourer; and by Mr. MacQueen, who was intimately acquainted with the geography and productions of Africa, and who had some years before declared his conviction, that the true way to abolish the slave trade would be to supplant it by lawful commerce. Aided by these gentlemen, he devoted himself sedulously to the task, frequently working at it about twelve hours a day.

This "Letter to Lord Melbourne" was intended exclusively for the members of the Government, and, accordingly, but twenty copies were printed.

"The book is fairly launched," he tells Mr. Johnston (who, when the work was finished, had left him for Scotland), "and

I am for the present a gentleman of leisure, and begin to think vehemently about Northrepps, Felthorpe, shooting, and such things; and in a fortnight's time I expect to be as much occupied in labours by day, and in dreams by night about rabbits and partridges, as I have been about negroes and Fernando Po. Our plans are fixed, and I go to Poles on Thursday; to Earlham, Friday; to Northrepps, by Felthorpe, Saturday; and all sorts of people are summoned to meet us at Northrepps on Monday.

"And now how does my little Andrew do? He's just the lad I should like to see at this moment. My little Tommy chatters away most fluently, and is exceedingly improved."

To his Sister, Miss S. M. Buxton, Northrepps Cottage.

"August 14.

"Now I must tell you a little about my adventures. Yesterday I saw almost all the ministers, and almost all their secretaries; and held the same language with them all. 'I have put my views in print, in order to tempt you to read them. While Parliament is sitting I expect nothing of you; but, promise me this, that, as soon as the recess begins, you will read my book before you take up any other subject. Give me an unequivocal yes or no; and, if you say "Yes," act with vigour.' I have got a specific promise from each, that, without delay, they will read, consider, and decide. I saw yesterday Lords Melbourne, Glenelg, Palmerston, and Howick; Hobhouse, Spring Rice, Grey, Stanley, Wood, Porter, Anson, Stephen. The last sent me word that he was very busy, so our interview must be very short. I walked into his room, put the book into his hand, and, without saying a word, walked out again. He called out, 'What does this mean?' 'The shortest interview you ever had with any body,' said I. 'Ah,' said he, 'the head is short enough, but there's a terrible long tail to it.' * * * In short, I was remarkably well pleased with my day's work. Got home near twelve o'clock. The waves of the day too agitated for easy getting to sleep."

To J. J. Gurney, Esq.

"August 18.

"To begin with that which has chiefly occupied my attention for many months past: last November I started on a pilgrimage

through all the books and parliamentary documents connected with the slave trade. I began from the very beginning, and, partly in person, still more by deputy, I traversed the whole subject; and such a scene of diabolism, and such an excess of misery, as I had to survey, never, I am persuaded, before fell to the lot of an unhappy investigator. Will you believe it, the slave trade, though England has relinquished it, is now double what it was when Wilberforce first began; and its horrors not only aggravated by the increase of the total, but in each particular case more intense than they were in 1788? Will you believe it, again, that it requires at the rate of a thousand human beings per diem, in order to satisfy its enormous maw? * * * How glad have I been to have escaped from the turmoils of Parliament, and to have my mind and my time my own, that I might bestow them without interruption on this vast mass of misery and crime!"

A sentence in this letter may give the false impression that Mr. Wilberforce's exertions in putting down the slave trade had proved a failure; whereas his main attack was directed against the *British* slave trade, and this had been effectually stopped. That which Mr. Buxton attacked, and which, unhappily, still exists, is the trade carried on by the Spanish, Portuguese, and Brazilians.

The following is an outline of Mr. Buxton's plans as suggested in the first instance in the letter to Lord Melbourne, and afterwards more fully detailed in the work called "The Slave Trade and its Remedy."

The first part of these works was devoted to the examination of the actual state of the slave trade: and startling indeed were the facts unfolded. Mr. Buxton demonstrated from *official* evidence, that, at the very least, 150,000 negroes are annually imported into Brazil and Cuba alone! He drew also from a vast number of sources, a description of the horrors attendant on the trade, which, he says, "has made Africa one universal

den of desolation, misery, and crime." He showed what a waste of human life is incurred in the seizure of the slaves for the merchant; in the hurried march through the desert to the coast, with scarce a pittance of water, under the broiling sun; in the detention at the ports, where hunger and misery carry off numberless wretches, whose fate might yet be envied by the miserable beings that survive. These, pressed down for weeks together between the decks of the slave ship, have to endure torments which cannot be described. Scarcely can the mind realise the horrors of that dreadful charnel-house; the sea-sickness—the suffocation—the terrible thirst—the living chained to the putrid dead—the filth—the stench—the fury of despair. Even after landing, multitudes more perish in what is called "the seasoning on the coast;" and the remnant who have lived through all this misery, are then sold to endure as slaves the abominable cruelties of Spanish and Portuguese masters. He showed that, at the very least, two negroes perish for every one who is sold into slavery. "In no species of merchandise," he exclaims, "is there such waste of the raw material, as in the merchandise of man. In what other trade do two-thirds of the goods perish, in order that one-third may reach the market?"

He recommended the adoption of two preliminary measures:—one, the concentration upon the coast of Africa of a more efficient naval force; the other, the formation of a chain of treaties with the native chiefs of the interior. These two measures were not brought forward as the remedy itself, but merely as clearing the way for its operation.

"The real remedy, the true ransom for Africa, will be found," says Mr. Buxton, "in her fertile soil:" and he drew up, from a vast variety of authorities, an ac-

count of the boundless resources which West Africa contains. He established the fact, first, that gold, iron, and copper abound in many districts of the country; secondly, that vast regions are of the most fertile description, and are capable of producing rice, wheat, hemp, indigo, coffee, &c., and above all, the sugar-cane and cotton in any quantities; while the forests contain every kind of timber — mahogany, ebony, dye-woods, the oil-palm, &c.; besides caoutchouc and other gums. He also proved that the natives, so far from shunning intercourse with us, have been in every case eager and importunate that we should settle among them.*

While the capabilities of Africa are thus extensive, the facilities for commercial intercourse are on the same scale. He mentioned those afforded by the great rivers on the west coast of Africa, especially the Niger, which had been explored by Lander to the distance of 500 miles from the sea, and the Tchadda, which runs into it; and he dwelt much on the singular fitness of the situation of Fernando Po, as an emporium of commerce. He emphatically declared his conviction that Central Africa possesses within itself everything necessary for the growth of commerce; and he proceeded to point out in confirmation of this statement, that in certain spots on the west coast of Africa, where some degree of security had been afforded, agriculture and commerce had as a consequence immediately sprung up and the slave trade had withered away. He derived his facts from authorities of the most varied and impartial description, including extracts from the authors most conversant with Africa; from the writings of the governors of

* As an indication of the care and labour bestowed in consulting authorities, those may be enumerated, to whom reference is made, upon the single item of cotton. They consist of Sir Fulk Grevell, Beaver, Dalrymple, Col. Denham, Clapperton, Mungo Park, Ashmun, Lander, Laird, the Rev. J. Pinney, the Rev. J. Seys, Mac Queen, De Caillé, Dupuis, and Robertson.

Sierra Leone, Fernando Po, and the Gambia; from those of all the travellers who had explored Western Africa; and from those of African merchants, scientific men, and others, who had studied the subject at home.

"It was not," he says, "till after I had come to the conclusion that all that was wanting for the deliverance of Africa was that agriculture, commerce, and instruction should have a fair trial, that I discerned that others had arrived by practical experience at the same result which I had learnt from the facts, and from reasoning upon them; and I was very well pleased to renounce any little credit which might attach to the discovery, in exchange for the solid encouragement and satisfaction of finding that what with me was but theory, was with them the fruit of experience."

While he laid such stress upon the importance of protecting and encouraging legitimate commerce in Africa, he enforced, with equal earnestness, the necessity of raising the native character by imparting Christian instruction. "Let missionaries and schoolmasters, the plough and the spade, go together." "It is the Bible and the plough that must regenerate Africa;" and he gives details proving the powerful influence, moral and physical, which missions have exerted over the aborigines in different parts of the world.

The following were some of the specific steps suggested by him for turning the attention of the Africans from their trade in men to the trade in merchandise—That the British Government should increase the efficiency of the preventive squadron on the coast—should purchase Fernando Po, as a kind of head quarters and mart of commerce—should give protection to private enterprises—and should enter into treaty with the native chiefs for the relinquishment of the slave trade, for grants of lands to be brought into cultivation, and for arrangements to facilitate a legitimate trade.

He proposed that an expedition should be sent up the Niger for the purpose of setting on foot the preliminary arrangements in Africa for the agricultural, commercial, and missionary settlements; of entering into treaties with the native chiefs; of convincing the negroes of the uprightness of our intentions; and of ascertaining the state of the country along that vast tract of land, which is traversed by the river Niger.

A company was also to be formed, by private individuals, for the introduction of agriculture and commerce into Africa. This was to be effected by sending out qualified agents to form settlements in favourable situations; to establish model farms; to set up factories, well stored with British goods, and thus to sow the first seeds of commerce; and, in short, to adopt those means which have been elsewhere effectual in promoting trade and the cultivation of the soil. He admitted entirely that this company must not expect speedy returns, although he strongly maintained the reasonable prospect of eventual profit.

Upon private individuals, also, would devolve the responsibility of co-operating with the religious societies in sending out a strong force of those upon whom he especially depended for the deliverance of Africa, missionaries and native teachers.

He dwelt much upon the importance of making use of native agency for this purpose.

"The climate of Africa," he writes to the Rev. Hugh Stowell, "presents an obstacle to European agents being employed in the work to any extent, and we must look to the natives themselves to be the agents in this great enterprise. This is no new scheme, for you will observe that it has been tried in various quarters of the globe with considerable success, and various denominations of Christians are following out the plan, with zeal and perseverance, in India and Africa."

CHAPTER XXVII.

1838, 1839.

COMMUNICATIONS WITH GOVERNMENT, AND WITH PRIVATE INDIVIDUALS.—AFRICAN CIVILISATION SOCIETY.—PREPARATION OF "THE SLAVE TRADE, AND ITS REMEDY," FOR PUBLICATION.—DEPARTURE FOR ITALY.

MR. BUXTON watched with great anxiety the effect that might be produced on the ministers by the statements thus laboriously prepared. In the beginning of September he was summoned to town by Lord Glenelg; he writes thence—

To Andrew Johnston, Esq.

"Colonial Office, Sept. 5. 1838.

"Lord Glenelg sent me word on Monday that he wanted an hour's conversation with me. With the ardour natural to authors, I construed this into a slave-trade conference, the acquiescence of the Government in my plan, and Africa almost delivered. I have now been waiting till half of my hour has elapsed, so I am getting fidgetty and fearful that my dreams will not be realised. However, I believe that a good Providence has undertaken the management of this business, and therefore I will not be troubled.

"Near five o'clock. Thank God! I say it with all my heart, thank God! the Government, says Lord Glenelg, are deeply interested by my book. Melbourne writes to him strongly about it. The cabinet meet on Friday on the subject. Glenelg says they accede to all I have said as to previous failures. They think I have greatly underrated the extent, and still more the mortality. In short, he was convinced, to my heart's content. I have since seen Lushington; he is delighted with the book; accedes to it with all his heart. In short, a happy day."

"I am highly pleased," he writes home, "and very, very thankful, and feel very keenly—what am I that this mercy should be heaped upon me?"

To Joseph J. Gurney, Esq.

"Northrepps, Dec. 7.

"Within the last month, I have been to town, and have had many interviews with members of the cabinet, and I find that my book has made a deeper impression upon them than I had ventured to hope for. They all admit that the facts are placed beyond all dispute. They tell me that they want no further evidence whatsoever of the extent and horrors of the trade; and they admit, in very strong terms, that they are converts to the views which I have developed. In short, the subject now under consideration is, how they shall act? I have been embodying my views in nine propositions, and have stated seriatim the steps they ought to take, and the order in which they should be taken. I expect that this slave-trade question will find me in employment for the rest of my days, and my hope is that you and I may work together in it for many years to come. I am not so sanguine as to expect that so vast a work will be rapidly executed. Our favourite text is, 'not by might nor by power, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord.'

"Now for a little domestic news. Everything is going on smoothly with us. * * * I am in fair health, in excellent spirits, and with causes for thankfulness, turn which way I will. * * * The Cottage ladies are much as usual in health. It is a vast pleasure to have their cordial co-operation and assistance in all my objects. *The Book* goes by my name, but in truth it is the production of us all.

"You will be interested to hear that we have at length got a Bible Society at Holt. Finding it in vain to wait for the co-operation of the clergy, we determined to act without them. I took the chair, and I hardly was ever present at so satisfactory a meeting. The ladies are active; they have already got ten districts, though the society is only in its infancy."

The Government had acceded to his theory: it now remained to be seen whether they would adopt his practical suggestions. He writes from London—

"I was ushered into the presence of Lord Glenelg, muttering to myself, 'O God, give me good speed this day!' * * * I soon found that my nine propositions had worked *admirably*. They were formally discussed in the Cabinet. Glenelg intimated that the Ministers were unanimous, and that they had resolved, with some modifications, to act upon them. I was told that Lord —— said it was the boldest conception that had been struck out in our days. * * * I am now going to Upton to dinner. God grant I may hear good accounts from Northrepps, and then I shall be full of gladness of heart. Is not my news delightful?

"I did not sleep well," he tells Mr. Johnston; "who could expect it, after such a day; after finding that it was intended to realise my most intense desire? I was also delighted at learning at the Colonial Office, that the Kāt River Hottentots, Caffres, West Indian negroes, are all doing beautifully."

The result of these interviews was a request on the part of Government that he should enlarge and publish his work to arouse the public mind, but it was desired that the practical suggestions should be kept back till they had more fully determined on their course. The resignation, shortly afterwards, of Lord Glenelg, was deeply regretted by Mr. Buxton. Lord Normanby, however, adopted the views of his predecessor, and the whole Cabinet appears to have considered the advantage which would accrue to England, as well as to Africa, from the opening of so vast a field of commercial speculation, as sufficiently important to warrant their attempting to carry them into effect.

To Joseph J. Gurney, Esq.

"March 5. 1839.

"Lord Glenelg's retirement from office is a very heavy blow, and if it were not that I have all-sufficient proof that the great questions of slavery and the slave trade are under the management of better than human hands, I should be very uncomfortable indeed. Our friend Joseph Sturge is somewhat restive about

my slave trade views; won't go along with me. No matter; he'll take his own line, and nevertheless the truth is preached, and therein I will rejoice."

On the 1st of April he was much pleased by receiving the following lines from his valued friend, Mrs. Opie.

To Thomas Fowell Buxton, Esq., on his Birthday.

1st of 4th mo., 1839.

I saw the dawn in brightness break,
That usher'd in thy natal day,
And bade my humble lyre awake,
To breathe to thee our votive lay.

Too soon such hopes away were driven,
But, while I sat in mute despair,
I felt a dearer power was given,
And breathed a *holier* tribute—PRAYER.

And lo! from forth my inmost heart,
For thee did solemn prayers ascend,
Prayers, such as voice could ne'er impart,
Arose for Mercy's child, and Afric's friend!

I wish'd thee years of vigorous health,
Thy Christian labours to pursue:
I wish'd thee still increasing wealth,
To do the good thou fain would'st do.

I wish'd, alas! what ne'er may be,
That ere thou reach thy well-earn'd rest,
Thou may'st behold thy Afric free,
And know her myriads call thee blest.

And, Oh! I wish thy toils this nobler meed,
To thee more dear than aught of earthly fame,
May Afric's sons from heathen darkness freed,
Be taught to know and bless the SAVIOUR'S name!

To Edward N. Buxton, Esq.

"Northrepps Hall, April 12.

"I am hard at work upon my second volume, but the present subject, namely, the mode of delivering Africa, requires a vast deal deeper thought than the mere detail of enormities. I earnestly hope that I shall be kept by a good Providence from falling into any gross errors. I am sure I have very little reliance on my own knowledge or wisdom in such abstruse considerations. But we must hope to be guided by a better than human wisdom, and defended by something stronger than the human arm."

To the Rev. J. M. Trew.

"Northrepps Hall, April.

"I am amused by the generous indignation expressed by yourself and Stokes, as to the attack made upon me in the 'Emancipator.' I cannot, however, say that it provoked me in the slightest degree. I know that a little unfair censure is part of the bargain in any great work, and, for my part, abused as I have been, I must confess that in summing up the two accounts, of unmerited blame and unmerited commendation, I find that the balance is on the side of the latter.

"It would have been utterly at variance with all my notions to have given it an answer. Silent disregard is the severest and most justifiable species of revenge.

"But now for business: I am strongly of opinion with you, that the time is come for doing something more with respect to the agents, with whom the West Indies will supply us. I am entirely engaged with my second volume, and with digesting the details of the general plan; so I must beg you to turn your attention to a new address to the missionaries and schoolmasters in the West. Will you do this? In any other case I should apologise for throwing a burden off my own shoulders on to yours; but I have come to a very convenient compromise with my conscience, viz., that in the great cause of African deliverance I have a right to the energetic services of every one who feels as I do; and hence no scruple is admissible as to giving trouble. Upon this principle I slave all my family, and not a few of my neighbours.

"I send you Miller's letter from Antigua, telling me that he has already ten good Christian Blacks ready to be located on the Niger."

To the same.

"I am more and more impressed with the importance of normal schools. It is not only that there will be a great demand for schoolmasters in the West Indies, but I have a strong confidence that Africa will, ere long, be opened to commerce, civilisation, and Christianity; and then there will be need, indeed, of educated and religious black schoolmasters. The idea of compensation to Africa, through the means of the West Indies, is a great favourite with me; and I think we shall see the day when we shall be called to pour a flood of light and truth upon miserable Africa. Pray, therefore, bear in mind, that we ought to do a great deal as to normal schools."

To Mrs. Johnston.

"April 26.

"Somehow or other I am in rather a low key about Africa. It does not seem much regarded. The world is busy about something else. Bnt this is all nonsense. I have nothing to do with that part of the story; my business is to get my second volume out, and my plan arranged, and then it will be lodged in better hands than ours, so I do not mean to mope about the matter."

To Miss Gurney and Miss Buxton, at Northrepps Cottage.

My dear Ladies, "Spitalfields, June 10.

"I have received your magnificent packet to-day, and mean to read it with the party to-night. When shall I have Mr. Richard's commencement? I spent yesterday at Poles, and very much enjoyed myself, spending hours in the wood. 'Then are they glad because they be quiet.' If we do meet at Rome this winter, we *will* enjoy ourselves. 'We'll never do nothing whatever on earth,' and if that is not pleasure, what is? I am sick of turmoiling."

To Mr. and Mrs. Johnston, on taking up their residence at Halesworth.

"Upton, June 28.

"In the first place, let me utter that which has settled down upon my mind for some days, namely, a hearty desire that blessings of all sorts, and the best of their kind, may be poured down upon your Halesworth habitation, and that you may all of you flourish in health and wealth, cheerfulness and popularity, in neighbours, friends, and dearest relatives, and in a wide and deep stream of that water, 'which springeth up unto eternal life!'

"Yesterday I was whipt off to a meeting in the City, on the subject of Bethnal Green, and had to tell the Bishop of London that I was ready to join Methodists, or Baptists, or Quakers, or any honest body, in spreading Christianity in Bethnal Green; but he took it *very kindly*."

Mr. Buxton spent some months in the neighbourhood of London; incessantly engaged both in communications with the Government, and in endeavouring, with great success, to excite the interest and obtain the co-operation of many of his friends. In this as in previous undertakings he acted in complete concert with Dr. Lushington, with whom every plan was carefully discussed, and who bore his full share of the burden. At Dr. Lushington's house was held a preliminary meeting of a few select friends, before whom Mr. Buxton wished in the first instance to lay his views.*

* The following was the memorandum prepared by him for this meeting:—

"April, 1839.

"The principle has been sufficiently explained:—It is the deliverance of Africa, by calling forth her own resources.

"In order to do this we must:—1. Impede the traffic; 2. Establish commerce; 3. Teach cultivation; 4. Impart education.

"To accomplish the first object we must increase and concentrate our squadron, and make treaties with coast and inland chiefs.

"To accomplish the second, we must settle factories and send out trading ships.

"To accomplish the third, we must obtain by treaty lands for cultivation, and set on foot a company.

He writes—

"We have had a highly satisfactory meeting. I felt that I had my case well up, and was troubled by no worrying doubts. Every one expressed that they were perfectly satisfied upon every point. Lord Ashley was very hearty indeed.

"The line I took about the climate of Africa was this: I stated that my plan was, to employ only a few Europeans, and to depend chiefly on the people of colour. I said at once, that I gave up all the mouths of the rivers, and all the swampy ground, and looked only to the high ground at the foot of the Kong Mountains; that I would not pledge myself to the healthiness even of that part, but that I expected that it would prove very different from the general notions of African climate."

This occasion is thus referred to by the Rev. J. M. Trew:—

"The first meeting (preparatory to the formation of the African Civilisation Society), which was strictly private, and at which Mr. Buxton made known his plans for prosecuting that great work, was attended by about twenty noblemen and gentlemen. I never shall forget his calm and dignified composure upon that occasion. Before he enunciated a syllable, he seemed to feel as if the destinies of Africa were suspended upon the events of that memorable day. I could not but lift up my heart in silent prayer, that the blessing of the most High God might rest upon his undertaking. And sure I am, that such was the frame of mind in which he ventured upon his work; so humble was he in his address, showing such ready deference to his friends, such touching sympathy for the objects of his solicitude, so alive to the importance of wisdom in his deliberation, and prudence in his plans. Meeting after meeting, private conferences with his more immediate advisers, and public committees of men of

---

"To accomplish the fourth, we must revive African institutions: look out for Black agents, &c.

"What then is actually to be done now by Government? Increase the squadron; obtain Fernando Po; prepare and instruct embassies (or authorise governors) to form treaties; including prevention of slave traffic; arrangements for trade; grants of land. By us; form a trading company; revive the African Institution."

all parties in politics, and opposite opinions in religion, only tended to show how eminently calculated he was for uniting men together on the great platform of benevolence.

"Nor was it only towards his superiors and equals in rank and station that this truly Christian spirit was evinced. All who laboured with him, from the highest to the lowest, could not fail to love him. How often, when worn with toil, and pressed beyond the powers of his naturally vigorous frame, with the weight of his labours, he has come to town, and visited, as was his custom, almost immediately afterwards the African Office; notwithstanding that such visits were usually the precursors of enlarged activity, yet there was not a servant in that employment who, during the period of their most arduous toils, did not feel his kindness, and gather from his beautiful example fresh motives to patient and enduring activity. Hence, a commission to execute, a paper to copy, or a mission to engage in for Sir Fowell, was undertaken with an alacrity which could not fail to manifest their respect and affection for his character. All loved him, honoured him, and hence strove to please him, with an earnestness which is too seldom to be found in the business of life. And when he came amongst them with a brow clouded with care, or internally perhaps labouring under some recent discovery whereby his great scheme of benevolence was retarded, there was not one amongst the paid servants of the office over which he presided who did not sympathise with him. There was indeed a calmness and a composure in his spirit in his great trials which rendered him an object of peculiar interest in public life. The mind, whilst it seemed as it were so wrapped up in its own contemplations, had not one complaining reflection, as if this or the other course would have been a more successful one. The bitter and cruel reproaches of some portion of the public press in no way affected him. It was evident that he held a principle within himself upon which to fall back; and, thus staying himself upon the Lord his God, he was enabled to possess his soul in patience, and to rest assured that in every event, God's Providence would finally work for good to the cause of suffering humanity."

The first meeting of the Society for the extinction of the Slave Trade and the Civilisation of Africa was held

at the end of July: it proved highly satisfactory. The Bishop of London, Lord Ashley, Sir Robert Inglis, Sir Thomas Acland, and other influential individuals, took an active part. Considerable funds were raised, and, "in short," Mr. Buxton writes to Mr. Trew,

"It was a glorious meeting, quite an epitome of the state. Whig, Tory, and Radical; Dissenter, Low Church, High Church, tip-top High church, or Oxfordism, all united. I was unwell, and made a wretched hand of my exposition, but good men and true came to my assistance, and supplied my deficiencies, and no one better than the Bishop of London.

"We determined to form two associations, perfectly distinct from each other, but having one common object in view, the putting an end to the slave trade. One of these associations to be of an exclusively philanthropic character, and designed mainly to diffuse among the African tribes the light of Christianity, and the blessings of civilisation and free labour; the other to have a commercial character, and to unite with the above objects the pursuit of private enterprise and profit."

A few days afterwards Lord Normanby announced to a deputation, consisting, amongst others, of the Bishop of London, Lords Euston, Worsley, and Teignmouth, Sir T. D. Acland, Sir R. H. Inglis, and Dr. Lushington, that the Government had come to the conclusion to send a frigate and two steamers to explore the Niger, and if possible to set on foot commercial relations with the tribes on its banks. Sir Edward Parry, the Comptroller of Steam Machinery, was appointed to prepare these vessels, and thus began the Niger Expedition.

The gratification which this success gave Mr. Buxton was soon clouded by private sorrows. His much-loved sister, Sarah Maria Buxton, of Northrepps Cottage, died very suddenly at Clifton on the 18th of August, 1839. This sister, whose brightness and activity of mind triumphed over the infirmity of very feeble health, was

ardently devoted to her brother, and took the liveliest interest in his undertakings. He deeply lamented her loss, which he said was the loss of a friend no less than of a sister. He thus mentions the event, in a letter to Mr. Joseph J. Gurney:—

"It is a vast void to us; she was part of our daily existence; her affection towards me was surpassing the love of women. However, there is exceeding comfort in the reflection that her battle is fought, her pains endured, her labours completed, and that henceforth a crown of Glory is provided for her from her bounteous Lord."

To the Rev. Josiah Pratt.

"Northrepps Hall, Aug. 26.

"I was absent from home when your letter arrived. A very severe family loss, the death of my sister, rendered it impossible to write on the day of my return. * * * I was very glad to receive your letter agreeing to join the African Society, for my impressions and anxieties with regard to Africa, and my desire for the spread of the Gospel, were planted in my mind in Wheeler Street Chapel, and this has led me particularly to desire to have you as a coadjutor in our present enterprise. I feel deep gratitude to you, little as I show it, for the stream of strong Christian truth which you poured upon my mind and my wife's, when we were first entering upon life.

"In looking at a great subject, every one has his favourite point of view. None takes such hold of me, as the conception of the possibility, with God's help, of pouring a stream of true light into Africa."

To Joseph J. Gurney, Esq.

"Northrepps, Sept.

"While I was in London, we had heavy work to perform. The expedition which we have been urging upon Government, for the purpose of making amicable treaties with the natives up the Niger for the suppression of the vile traffic, and for trying the effect of agricultural cultivation, is to sail in November.

We had also to select five commissioners, whom we propose to send out; and it is not very easy to find persons, possessing at once nautical skill, and missionary spirit, habits of command, agricultural knowledge, and a deep interest in the negro race. We have, however, found them.

"Again, we want black persons from all conceivable situations, from the highest to the lowest, in our African colony, — and every one ought to be a real Christian; but a good Providence has prepared these in the West Indies and at Sierra Leone.

"Again, we want a combination of all sects and all parties in England, without going to the public; this has been managed. The Bishop of London and S. Gurney, Wesleyans, Baptists, &c., sail along very quietly together. The persons present at our first private meeting, will show that politics do not obtrude themselves. It consisted of Whigs: Lushington, W. Evans, Buxton; — Tories: Lord Ashley, Sir R. Inglis, Gladstone. Since that time we have vastly increased. We have obtained plenty of high names, a great deal of money, and a working committee of the right sort. In short, our prospects are encouraging; but I should not say so if I did not perceive, even more manifestly than in the slavery question, that we have ONE, INVISIBLE but IRRESISTIBLE, who takes care of us.

"Ever yours, my dear Joseph, in the threefold cord of taste, affection, and religion, if I may presume to include the last,

"T. FOWELL BUXTON."

To an offer from his nephew, Mr. W. E. Forster, to assist in the undertaking in any way his uncle might please, whether in England or Africa, he replies —

"Oct. 18.

"I have shamefully delayed answering your letter, but I have been incessantly engaged between a little shooting, which is a kind of duty, and writing with my new secretary Wiseman.

"In the first place, is it with your parents' knowledge you ask these questions? I am resolved that I will not even benefit Africa at their expense. Supposing them to approve, I answer your questions: — 1st. I do think you qualified for serving the cause, in all essentials, remarkably well indeed. In fact, I think you, upon the whole, better qualified than any one for

the task. 2ndly. If there should be an agricultural society, your paper on Eastern slave trade would obtain you the appointment without influence from me. 3rdly. Judge for yourself whether you can stand the charge of *pocket philanthropy*. I care not a straw for the suspicion of nepotism. I have been too much abused in my day to turn aside a step for vulgar censure. I will give you some strong verses on that subject when I have time; they may be useful to you. I am sure that I shall be serving Africa in getting you into its service: that is quite enough for my satisfaction."

It was at first hoped that the Niger expedition might have been fitted out very speedily, but Sir Edward Parry found that it was necessary for the Government to have ships built expressly for the purpose. In the interval, therefore, Mr. Buxton had the opportunity of following Mrs. Buxton to Rome, whither she had gone, accompanied by her youngest son and daughter, for the benefit of her health. But it was necessary for him before he left England to prepare a complete edition of his work on 'The Slave Trade and its Remedy;' the publication of which had been delayed in order to afford the Government time to deliberate on the plan.

To Mrs. Buxton, at Florence.

"Northrepps, Nov. 3.

"I have been working hard during the week, but yesterday we had our hardest day. With the exception of a few minutes in the garden, and a run to the Cottage, and dinner, I did not stop from breakfast till past one o'clock at night; and what is more extraordinary, I had seven capital secretaries at work, and many of them during the whole day. We got on famously; till then I had been very doubtful whether I should not be obliged to stay a week longer."

To Mrs. Johnston.

"London, Nov. 18.

"My book is finished; there it lies in a bag; a precious tug it has been to get it done. I do not think I have worked so

hard since I left college; day after day, from breakfast till two or three o'clock the next morning, with the interval of only a short walk and meals. I quite wonder at my capacity of exertion.

"The effect of this is, that I believe I shall not, when I start to-day, have a single memorandum unattended to, and hardly a letter unwritten."

This exertion was of too severe a character. He writes from Montreuil —

"Nov. 19.

"Since I left London I have spent four hours in sailing, some time in meals, a few minutes in chat and reading, but my great business has been *sleeping*, which I have effected with laudable energy."

CHAPTER XXVIII.

1839, 1840.

JOURNEY THROUGH FRANCE AND ITALY. — MONT CENIS IN A SNOW STORM. — ROME. — ITALIAN FIELD SPORTS. — BOAR HUNTING. — SHOOTING ON THE NUMICIAN LAKE. — ADVENTURE WITH ROBBERS. — THE JESUITS. — ST. PETER'S AND THE VATICAN. — PRISONS AND HOSPITALS OF ROME.

DURING the winter which Mr. Buxton spent abroad, he became, what he had never been before, a good correspondent on miscellaneous subjects. We shall give some copious extracts from his letters, which are written in a style of playfulness very natural to him when relieved from the pressure of business. Accompanied by Miss Gurney of Northrepps Cottage, and his second son, he travelled quickly through France, and crossed over to Italy by Mont Cenis :—

" Poste Royale, Mont Cenis.
Nine o'clock, Nov. 30. 1839.

" For our journey from Lyons to Chambery, and from Chambery to Lanslebourg, I refer you to Fowell's journal, only stating that we were in the carriage, and moving at a quarter before four in the morning, and out of the carriage at twelve o'clock at night. The last two stages were rather awkward ones to pass in the dark, as we had a continued succession of precipices on one side of the road: on one occasion, on seeing a light straight down, an immense way below us, A —— said, 'There is a star, only in the wrong direction.'

" At Lanslebourg we heard accounts of the roads being very difficult, but still passable and safe; so we gave them their own time, and started this morning at half-past nine, with eight horses to our carriage, two to our cart carrying our luggage, and thirteen attendants to bear up the carriage, in case of difficulty

from the snow. Things went smooth enough till about one o'clock in the day, when we encountered a '*tourmente*,' as they call it, and at the same moment, several carts coming from Italy loaded with casks of wine. It was difficult enough to keep the carriage up when we had all the road to ourselves (for it was snowing so fast that we could scarcely see), but when in addition to all this, we had to break out of the way to make room for these caravans, it was by no means agreeable. Our *soundings* of the snow, I should tell you, had not been very flattering; we had, first, a foot deep; after some time, two feet and a half, four feet, five feet; and between five and six feet of snow on the level was the encouraging report just before we met the wine-carts. Well at this pass, just upon the verge of the top of the mountain, the snow falling, the wind howling, we had this encounter with the caravans; and, first, there was a war of words between the leader of their train and the Maître de Poste of Lanslebourg, who had volunteered to conduct our expedition. Words ran to the highest pitch and the shrillest tones, and the most vehement and menacing action seemed to threaten a *charge*, in which the enemy had the safe side, and we the precipice; but at length an amicable compact was made between the belligerents, by which the whole force of both parties was employed in hoisting their carts further into the snow on their side. All this, however, had consumed some time, the tornado had then passed, but the accumulation of snow which it had occasioned, remained; and here we had our greatest chance of an overturn, but not over the precipice, which was a great way off (full seven feet). Over we must have gone, again and again, if it had not been for our little army, half of whom were on one side, pulling the carriage towards them; the rest on the other side, holding it up. Spink* tells me that at times the hind-wheel was nearly a foot from the top of the snow.

"We had just got through this difficulty, when the men cried out, 'there's a wolf;' and sure enough there sat the beast! This was an almost irresistible bait for us; my gun was loaded after a time (for we had some difficulty in finding the things), bnt then I recollected that a pretty thing it would be to leave A—— under such circumstances, and go a wolf hunting; so

* Miss Gurney's coachman.

with a sigh, I was obliged to commit the task to one of our guides, who is a chasseur by profession. He, from ignorance of our guns, got the locks wet, and missed fire, and away went the wolf.

"In comes the Maître de Poste, and tells us that it is in vain to attempt to descend this night. So here we are perched in a little bit of an inn at the top of Mont Cenis; the night very quiet, but hazy, which is a bad business, for last night they killed three foxes, and we might have had famous sport at them to-night; three chasseurs are employed to watch them and give me notice; but, with submission to them, I now conclude my letter and go to bed, only just saying, that though we are on the top of the Alps, we are very comfortable and warm, thanks to roaring fires, admirable trout from a tarn which is close below us, and, double windows. * * * I have just put my nose out, and it is snowing furiously; we have no great taste for a month here with nothing to eat but foxes, but, nevertheless, we are very cheery."

"Turin, Dec. 2. Five o'clock.

"Well, I must just finish my letter. We passed a quiet night, and found in the morning that a good deal of snow had fallen, but that the weather was bright, frosty, and calm; the last being the question of importance. We did not start early, as our guides begged permission to go to mass first, from which they did not return till nine o'clock. Then we started in a sledge. We called at the monastery, and left something for the poor, and saw the only remnant, as it is supposed, of the ibex, a race of goats. The appearance of the tops of the mountains, gloriously gilded by the sun, was as beautiful as it was strange: we enjoyed it much. We saw on the road several carriages which had been left, and one which had been overturned. It took us between six and seven hours to sledge down to Susa; it was a pleasant mode of conveyance. The little waterfalls,—the water, as it seemed, turned into dust, and glittering in the sun; a little rainbow about six feet span between us and the rock, only a yard distant; the view of the valley, reckoned, and no doubt justly, one of the finest in the Alps; all these united made our journey a delightful contrast to that of the preceding day."

The party reached Rome about the 12th December. Mr. Buxton thus writes on the 17th:—

"The weather here is delightful; I am now sitting opposite a large window on the shady side of the street, wide open, and it is warmer than any day in England last summer. We hear grand accounts of wild boars and woodcocks. I went to the Capitol yesterday morning. I am old, have never cultivated the fine arts, and all romance has been thumped out of me. One might as well expect to see a hackney coach-horse frisking about like a colt as to see me in ecstacies and raptures with antiquities and classical recollections. However, I was greatly taken with the view of the whole of Rome. There we saw before us, gathered in a very small space, the city so famous for everything:—at one time, the mistress of the world in arms; at another period, the ruler of nations by the fiat of the Vatican; and, again, the great nursery and school of the arts. You cannot conceive how all the objects of interest are clustered together close around you. Right beneath you, the yellow Tiber; within gun-shot, as it appears, the palace of the Cæsars: but I will not go on describing, or, in spite of myself, I shall grow quite romantic. But one thing did strike me more than all. In a little narrow dark cell, undoubtedly a Roman dungeon, there is a well-grounded tradition that St. Paul was confined immediately prior to his martyrdom. What a leaf is this in the history of man! In that palace lived the proud and cruel Cæsar, dreaming of immortal reputation. He is almost forgotten; while the prisoner, who lay in the dungeon loaded with chains, despised and detested, is still remembered. We daily read his works, and ten thousand copies of the history of his life are published every day!

"To-day I visited the Coliseum, the Flavian Amphitheatre. It wonderfully revives and brings to life their ancient spectacles,—it is immense; one can quite understand that a hundred thousand people could have a perfect view of the whole spectacle. The building in its substantial parts is perfect. What an enlightened people to be capable of erecting such an edifice; and what a set of ruthless savages to take delight in seeing poor captives there slaughtering each other, or torn to pieces by wild beasts! I have been interested beyond what I could have con-

ceived possible by these two spectacles, and quite vexed that I bring with me so slender a stock of classical lore.

"But now for business. I was more gratified than you could guess at hearing of your Spitalfields' school; that is better than Laocoons and Amphitheatres. I will subscribe what you ask with pleasure, and ten times more when you tell me it is wanted.

"An officer of justice called here this morning with a huge paper in columns, in which I was to describe myself in all possible ways, and concluding with the question, Why did I come to Rome? I desired Richards to insert, under this head, this—

> 'If the truth I must tell, I came here in the hope
> Of curing my wife and converting the Pope.'

But I find that the Pope wants no conversion: he has issued a few days ago a capital bull, hurling the Vatican thunders in excellent style on the heads of all dealers in human flesh. The Portuguese minister here is in a fine fury, but the Pope, having got into the scrape, excuses himself from the charge of being actuated by the English, by employing the Propaganda Society to send his bull to all the bishops and ecclesiastical authorities in Cuba, Brazil, &c. I am mightily pleased with this affair. Pray tell it to the Committee when they meet.

"Pleased as I am with the conduct of his Holiness, I am still more pleased that the steamers are ordered, and to be built, too, under the direction of Sir Edward Parry; this is working to some purpose. Dearest ——'s letter describing the Sunday at their new home was cheering and charming; my love to her and to all who formed that sunshiny picture. I have thought more than once, more than twenty times, that 'Godliness with contentment is great gain.'"

"Rome, 44. Via dei Condotti, Dec. 24.

"The time for wild boars is not fully arrived, though there were five in the market this morning. You must know that my chief duty here is to escort young ladies to parties, as my wife cannot go; so I have become more fashionable and dandy-like than I have been for the last forty years. On Thursday last, in the performance of this duty, I met Mr. Wyvill, an old M.P. friend, who told me he was going to hunt the boar, and invited me to join them, which of course I did. Conceive us, then,

starting before daylight, Fowell and I inside, and Spink on the box, with three other carriages full, distance about thirty miles, a road good for the first ten, for the next twenty super-execrable; with blocks of granite placed on it by the Romans, and never mended since the days of Julius Cæsar. The journey would have shattered our own carriage to pieces, killed our horses, and broken the heart of the coachman. However, we all arrived about sunset; we brought a sumptuous entertainment with us, and were lodged in the house of a priest, which was clean and comfortable. On our road we passed the beautiful lake and castle of Bracciano, which now belongs to Torlonia, the great Jewish banker at Rome. At five next morning we breakfasted, and immediately mounted a herd of various quadrupeds. Mine was a most raw-boned, lazy stumbling horse, and my right hand suffered much by the effort to get him along; but after awhile seeing that Spink had a sprightly jackass, I changed with him and got on gloriously. Seven miles of rock and quagmire, and stumps of trees, brought us to our hunting-ground, where we saw congregated our native 'Compagnons de chasse.' The leader was Velati, the Roman painter, and a fine fellow. He put us in our places, after first marching us over a fine wooded mountain. This made me reeking hot: but I was soon well cooled, for I was located in a dank sunless valley, the steam from which soon rusted my barrels, and made Spink's hands die away. There I stood for an hour and a half with my rifle in my hand. Spink said to me, 'They tell me these beasts fly out upon you,' and forthwith he produced a case of pistols. but he had no opportunity this time of using them. By sound of bugle we were ordered over the next hill, and such a scene opened upon us! I never saw such a combination of the sublime and the lovely. Our next station was on a jutting rock high up the mountain, the sun in full power, and as hot as with us in July; a valley below us, a high hill (the Monte Sacro) opposite; we ourselves surrounded with myrtle, wild lavender, and arbutus loaded with fruit; and all below and opposite, the same splendid foliage. In the distance, Soracte, as Horace says —

> 'Vides ut altâ stet nive candidum,
> Soracte,'

and to the right the blue Mediterranean.

"The assemblage of the boar-hunt at luncheon was most curious; forty dogs of every degree, from the turnspit to the wolf-hound, upwards of seventy native chasseurs with guns in their hands, clad in skins,—and fame is a lying vixen if they do not at odd times do a little in the bandit line; but here we were upon honour. Two foxes, two deer, and six boars were the product of the excursion. I have wild boar enough to stock a butcher's shop; one of the boars was the biggest that has been killed for eight years, weighing 400lbs. I have the tusks of the second, which are awkward weapons. You will want to know what F. and I did; but I am as modest in relation as valiant in deeds of arms, and so I only say that each of us did as much as any *gentleman* of the party. We started for home by moonlight, my donkey had been usurped, and I bestrode another of no generous breed; go he would not, and we were left behind. Again I changed with Spink, to whom Fortune had given a capital horse, and I soon joined and headed our party. Well was it we regained the party, or we should assuredly have slept in the open field or in the cave of a bandit; for after a time I was seized with a furious cramp, and had to be hauled off my horse, and this delayed us half an hour."

"Dec. 25.

"Last night I finished the history of our excursion against the boars on Monte Sacro. I am now going to tell you of another district famous in classic lore. On Monday, Prince Borghese Aldobrandini, the Duke Roviero, Aubin, Richards, Charles and I, two dogs and a chasseur, started precisely at 4 A.M. for Ostia, the very spot where Æneas pitched his camp, so if you wish to have a description of it you may turn to Virgil. We travelled about fifteen miles along a very decent road, the Tiber almost always close beside us. At length we came to a lake, 'fontis vada sacra Numici,' on which, excepting Richards, we all embarked, each having a boat, and started in exact line up the lake, which was covered with wild fowl. I think we must have seen at one time at least a thousand upon the wing together. We had to sit in the boats and fire as they came by. The two boats that went near the reeds had plenty of sport, but as I was in the middle, and had but one gun, I did not get many shots, and the position being awkward, and the distances very long, I was not exceedingly destructive. We got, however,

upwards of seventy head, and it was something to be shooting wild fowl within sight of the grove of pines recorded by Virgil, and on the very spot where Nisus and Euryalus perished. Pray read the story in Virgil, book IX., and in Dryden, for the benefit of the ladies. The most curious part of the affair was the test it afforded of the climate. On the 23rd of December I started on the lake in a wet boat, before sunrise, without anything on but my September shooting clothes, and there I sat till 3 o'clock in the afternoon without moving, no glove on my right hand, and my feet in damp hay; a heavy fog prevailed during part of the morning, and we were often enveloped in thick reeds; but during the whole time I had not a sensation of cold, and only suffered from the bite of musquitoes.

"But now I must turn to Richards, who went to explore the ruins of Ostia. A discovery had lately been made there of a burial-place on the Insula Sacra on the Tiber. As yet little has been done towards robbing the tombs, so that he found a variety of interesting antiques, sarcophagi, urns, inscriptions, &c. He brought us a perfect specimen of a lamp, and we are resolved to go, *en masse*, and lay our sacrilegious hands upon some of these treasures, and astonish the Antiquarian Society by the extent and novelty of our discoveries. To-day I have been, for the first time, at St. Peter's, and seen high mass performed by the Pope himself. But, to tell you the truth, I and my scribe are very sleepy; therefore, instead of attempting to give you a notion of the wonderful grandeur of the building, or the splendour of the ceremonies, I shall confine myself to saying that, as a show, it was pre-eminently grand; as a service, there was

'Devotion's every grace, except the heart.'

For ornament, for the display of wealth, for music, for, in short, *a scene*, fifty to one on St. Peter's Cathedral against the Friends' Meeting at Plaistow; for religion, for worship in spirit and in truth, fifty to one on Plaistow Meeting against St. Peter's and all its glories!"

It has been mentioned that on quitting England Mr. Buxton had completed his work on the Slave Trade,

and had left it to be printed. When, however, proof copy was prepared, it was found by those who were superintending the publication that very considerable alterations in the arrangement were expedient. On this being communicated to him, he replies: —

"Dec. 26. 1839.

"I wrote last night a ranting letter about wild boars and Nisus and Euryalus, as if these were the only things deserving attention; but your letter of Dec. 11., received to-day, has brought me to my senses, and I am as much in the book as the day I left Northrepps. * * *

"In truth, I give you at once the warmest thanks, and the most hearty approval of these very untoward suggestions. In fact, the more I have thought of it, the more I have assented, nay, have thought it indispensable, and loath the higgledy-piggledy fashion in which I had tossed my points together. * * * Idleness would have said, sit still; nervousness the same; you might naturally have felt, 'I know you to be a hard man, apt to be indignant at those who offer advice, take that is thine own, and a pretty hash it will be!'"

To E. N. Buxton, Esq.

"Rome, Jan. 1. 1840.

"* * * The tramontane, or northern wind, has come down upon us and has cooled us; nevertheless, we spent three hours yesterday most pleasantly in walking together about the grounds of the Villa Albani; as many the day before on the Palatine Hill. It is wonderful what a deal there is to see in this city. * * * But in all their finery there is dirt, and, on the other hand, in the midst of their dirt there is some remnant of magnificence. You will see a palace and a pigstye close together; and, moreover, the pigstye will have a small touch of the palace, and the palace a large touch of the pigstye. Nothing, however, can exceed the beauty and luxuriance of the villas round about Rome. I only wish you had seen the deep blue sky over the Albani villa; the residences of Cicero and Horace before us; the hills, some of them covered with snow;

and a profusion of roses and oranges growing in the gardens around.

"I yesterday went with a large party, for the first time, to the Vatican. I have, as you are aware, no knowledge of paintings or statues, no cultivated taste, no classical recollections; and it is well for me I have not. That place would have set me raving; it almost did as it was. You may walk there all day long, and at a good pace too; and at either side of you there is something which strikes the meanest capacity with admiration and reverence. There were two or three rooms full of birds and beasts in marble, to the very life: and then there was the Apollo; why, man, it is beautiful past description. It rivets your eyes. What a most wonderful people those Romans were, to have congregated together such a profusion of excellence! Well, if these sights produce such an effect upon me, old, obtuse, and unromantic as I am, woe betide those who come in their youth, and are lovers of the arts. It is enough to make them all daft. I am going to-morrow to wash off the effects of the Vatican by some snipe-shooting in the Pontine Marshes."

To Joseph J. Gurney, Esq.

"Jan. 6.

"How passing strange it is, that I should write from Rome, addressing you in Barbadoes. I wish we could change places for a few days. Neither St. Peter's, nor the Capitol, nor the dying gladiator, nor Apollo himself, all beautiful as he is, are so interesting to me as would be the sight of the negroes working for their own benefit, and sheltered by law from the lash of the cart-whip. It is a sight I pant to behold.

"And now as to my worthy self. I have enjoyed both the country and the wonderful works of art in Rome more than I had any notion that I could. I sometimes laugh at my own romancings, and wonder that such an old, untaught man should give way to such true pleasure in matters which he does not understand. Rome is, in truth, a wonderful place. There is hardly any thing more remarkable than the profusion of its treasures. What Rome must have been in its glory, when the relics are so surprising! * * *

"Everything bespeaks wonderful intellect on the part of the Romans; but then the base, cruel, cowardly ruffians! Fancy the whole population pouring into the Coliseum, to see the poor captives hew one another to pieces, and finding infinite delight and merriment in such a holiday!"

To Edward N. Buxton, Esq.

"Jan. 21.

"I picture to myself your arriving at Northrepps on Monday, January 13th, and you and your party hugely enjoying yourselves during the week; and I fancy I know precisely where you shot each day, if not the exact number of the slain. I thought you had an especial nice party; but why did Gurney Hoare absent himself? I suppose that Edmund was at the top of the tree. I hope you took decent care of yourselves, age and wisdom being absent, I at Rome, and Sam Hoare at Lombard Street. You may well suppose that I was *un peu fâché* to be absent, the first time for more than twenty years, from my humble task of attending to the wants and promoting the sport of a rabble of boys. I was resolved, however, to console myself as best I might, and I accomplished this so effectually that I am ready to back the Pontine Marshes against all Norfolk. On Monday most of our party embarked with three dogs, on board a huge monster of a vehicle, and rumbled along to Albano. The next morning our friend Cresswell, myself, the cacciatore, and our Italian servant Pittini, with three Italian pointers and little Juno, pursued our voyage, leaving the boys and girls behind, and reached Cisterna at ten, where we had fair accommodation, and made friends with another shooting-party, who breakfasted and dined with us. We shot in the woods, an immense tract of which extends on each side of the road.

"The next day we did very little, our bag being only eighteen woodcocks; but oh! such a mishap. While Cresswell and the cacciatore were diving through a thick fen in the wood up sprung three wild boars within ten yards of them, two young ones and one bigger than a donkey! Cresswell thought them tame ones, and did not fire, though he had a clear and beautiful shot. The cacciatore gave them his two barrels in vain, and roared out to me; but before I could get a ball into my gun, one of the younger ones passed before me at about fifty yards.

But what was the use of a charge of No. 6. at that distance? however, I had a perfect view of the fellow, as pure a wild boar as ever was littered, about the size of one of the pigs at Cross's.

"On Thursday morning we passed early through Tre Ponti, the 'Three Taverns' of Scripture, and thence went on, five miles further, to Appii Forum, so called now, and so called in the days of Saint Paul. I read St. Paul's account of his journey: and on the road he traversed, and in view of the very same hills which he saw (and most remarkable hills they are), I pictured to myself his friends approaching, 'whom when Paul saw, he thanked God and took courage.'

"We had a letter from the Duke of Braschi, the owner of twenty miles square hereabouts, to his steward, who resides in an immense old building, once the palace of the Braschi, and at an earlier period a great monastery. The steward was absent and, alas! the key of the cellar was in his pocket; the servants, however, received us with all civility. Our first inquiry was about beds. To look at, they were very well. 'Have they been slept in?' I inquired. 'Oh! yes.' 'Who slept last in my bed?' 'The Duke of Braschi himself.' At night, when I was going to bed, I asked another little question, which wholly altered the view of things, and would have sent us back to Cisterna that night if we had possessed any mode of conveyance; but, as it was, we were in for it. The unlucky question was, 'When was the Duke last here?' 'Ten years ago was his last visit.' So my bed, it was quite clear, had not been slept in for ten years! The house was haunted to the last degree; it was quite a preserve of ghosts. But there were more rats than ghosts, more fleas than rats, more musquitoes than fleas, and more musical frogs than any of them. Oh! such a concert, such an orchestra of bull-frogs, such a band of musquitoes, and such a rattling of ghosts (for assuredly they were ghosts if they were not rats), all combined together, formed, if not as harmonious, at least as remarkable a chorus as ever delighted mortal ears. In the morning I saw poor Cresswell; in addition to my musicians he had had four indefatigable cats, who during the live-long night had serenaded him for admission into his room, where our game was lodged, and over his window was a dovecote, into which the rats were

continually making commandos; in short, he had enjoyed such a concord of 'sweet sounds' as conferred upon him what Milton calls 'a sober certainty of waking bliss.' 'I have not,' he exclaimed, 'slept a single wink all night.' 'How classical!' said I: 'you and Horace attempt to sleep on precisely the same spot, and, for aught I know, in the same bed, and he tells us,—

'Mali culices ranæque palustres
Avertunt somnos.'

"We rode three miles along the canal which carried Horace, then entered a deep marsh with gigantic reeds. There were more snipes there than you ever saw, or ever will see, unless you come to Rome, and yet the people complained that they were very scarce. I believe it, for our sporting friends at Cisterna, declared that the day before they had put up ten thousand; but they had only bagged ten. The snipes were terribly wild; and no wonder, for what between the peasants who are always at them, and the Romans who dedicate their Sabbaths to them, they are shot at every day in the week, and twice on a Sunday. We managed, however, to bring home twenty couple, a rail, a quail, a hare, and three ducks. But the next day was the grand one. We went two miles further, and then entered a noble wood. It was almost impenetrably thick. We had a good stout fellow of a cacciatore, whom we brought from Rome. He wore a breeches-plate made of the skin of a wolf, which even the Roman thorns could not penetrate; he is a hunter of renown here, and his name is 'Gabbiate,' which, literally translated, means 'the uncombed.' I fought, I confess, rather shy of the bushes, and so did Juno, and so did two of our pointers, so also one of our two remaining beaters. In about a quarter of an hour this fellow emerged from the wood, and planted himself by my side; but, as I was sneaking myself, I was up to his tricks, and by signs sufficiently significant, sent him back into the brambles. Of him we saw and heard no more till luncheon-time, when he reappeared with a pipe in his mouth; and for the remainder of the day, while we shot, he smoked. The woodcocks flew about in every direction. If we had had Larry, and our crew of men, and every dog in North Erpingham, we might have done some work. But this was not the worst; we could not speak Italian,

and our attendants could not understand a word of English; and so, after a very superficial beating of this superb part of the wood, they marched us off, in spite of our unintelligible remonstrances, to another part, where we got but one woodcock and a few snipes, and our day was spoiled for want of being able to utter a sentence:— another illustration added to a thousand before, of the evil of not speaking modern languages. However, this day yielded twenty-one woodcocks and nine snipes. Upon the whole, you may well suppose that I enjoyed myself greatly; but you will hardly guess what it was that pleased me most, — it was the splendid day, and noble mountains, and dark forests, and glittering villages, and various lights, that were, beyond snipes and woodcocks, the great attractions to me."

"Feb. 3.

"Now prepare your mind for an adventure which occurred to us in our shooting excursion on Saturday, into which good live banditti are introduced, and blows struck and all the charming accompaniments of daggers and pistols. You will be dying, I am sure, to hear the story, and to learn the return of killed, wounded, and prisoners. But suspend your curiosity, be content with knowing, for the present, that our adventure is to-day the talk of all Rome, and that troops are sent off to the marshes to shoot, not snipes, but robbers; at least I suppose so. But to business first, if you please.

* * * * *

"Well, now, sleepy as I am, I will tell you our story:— On Saturday morning, Aubin, I, and Spink, in the inside, our cacciatore and the coachman on the box, with our three dogs, started to Macarese after the snipes. You may remember that I told you in a former letter the distance of this marsh, also that we saw in the road the blood of a man who had been murdered the preceding night, and a little cross stuck into the hedge to commemorate the event. About half a mile further on, turning into a gate, we observed another cross, intimating that another murder had been committed since our last visit; and I hear there is no part of the country where you will find a more choice collection of robbers and assassins than this same Macarese. I took Spink merely to attend me; but he had the wit to borrow a little single-barrelled gun, and, as I saw he was

bent upon signalising himself, I had not the heart to baulk him. Alas! the waters were down and the snipes were up, and, though we shot capitally, we only managed to get eleven couple. We might have brought home a rare stock of vipers if we had wished it, for we saw about a dozen in a quarter of an hour. When we were going to have luncheon I selected my spot, but little Juno made such a fuss that we looked into it, and saw a viper nearly two feet long. We removed, and out of the bush at our feet went another great banging fellow.

"We lunched, however, and went again at the snipes. At length we started towards home; but an unlucky jack snipe seduced Spink some way back again. He went after it and killed it. No sooner was his gun off, than from a broad, almost impenetrable hedge, which crosses the swamp, out rushed two fellows; the first who arrived snatched his gun, the other seized his collar, gave him a hard kick on his leg, and drew a long knife out of his side-pocket. Could any situation be more forlorn? we out of hearing, his gun discharged, his knees knocking together through terror, his head turning round and round, his heart in his mouth. I use his own expressions, and never did I hear so vivid a description as he gave of the scene, for he lives to tell it. What did he do in such adversity? Why, exactly the right thing: he let go his gun, put his two hands into his waistcoat pockets, and produced a pair of pocket pistols, loaded, capped, and cocked, and presented one at the breast of each robber! The state of affairs was suddenly changed. The heroes, who a moment before jabbered so loud and kicked so hard, turned tail, dropped the gun, and dashed into the hedge, and Spink remained master of the field of battle. But he did not keep it long. 'I seized the gun,' said he; 'I did not know where I was, nor anything about it; I ran through a pool up to my waist, and never stopped till I fell from fright and want of breath; then I loaded and fired my gun as a signal of distress.' Now I must tell you that we had waited nearly half an hour for him, somewhat disconcerted at being detained; and thought it very cool of him to be following his sport while we were kicking our heels. This gave occasion to the cacciatore to exercise the wit for which he is famed. 'Why the man must have got a charm, he has had more shots than all of us put together; he must hereafter be called The

Fortunate Youth.' Little did we dream that the poor fellow was then in the extremity of distress, hardly able to move, and not knowing whether his road lay to the right or to the left. But upon hearing another gun fired by him, it occurred to me that he might be making signals, so, having fired our guns, which singularly enough he never heard (probably he was lying down in a kind of swoon from over exertion), I began to halloo as loud as ever I could, and at length he heard me, and was cheered by the sound of my voice, and came running after us.

"When he arrived near me I was beginning an oration to apprise him how we had been all kept waiting; when, on looking into his face, I saw him pale as ashes, and looking most strange and bewildered. I immediately gave him some brandy, told him to compose himself, and at length we heard the history of his adventures.

"His extreme satisfaction that he had not shot the two men, which if they had persisted a moment longer he certainly would have done; his most natural and graphic description of his exquisite terror; his conviction that neither he nor his mistress would ever have been happy again if the blood of these men had been upon his hands; his deep detestation of snipe-shooting, marshes, Rome, and Romans; his solemn resolution never to quit my side if he had the misfortune again to go a shooting; his vivid apprehensions, and most anxious inquiries whether we thought there was a chance of our getting back again to Rome without encountering a fresh gang of banditti—these beguiled our way home.

"Everybody approves the course he took; and it seems likely to be the fashion for every one, in imitation of him, to carry pistols in their waistcoat pockets when they go out shooting. I ought to have told you that, probably, these fellows had been watching us all day. I saw one creeping along on the other side of the hedge some time before, and, if I could have spoken Italian, should have tempted him to assume the place of my attendant which Spink had relinquished. Well, there ends my story. I wish you could have heard him tell what he felt when these hideous fellows rushed out, and when the knife met his eyes. It was, as he told the story, not only very tragical, but irresistibly comical. To do him justice, however, I am right

glad that the accident befel him and not me. I am afraid, if I had had a pair of pistols in my hand, under such circumstances, in such a fright, I should have had to bear upon my nerves a sense of two human beings plunged into a most awful eternity. But, good night. Rome is affluent in robbers; we hear of a robbery or murder every day, and a gang has taken post they say in a wood twelve miles off."*

To Samuel Hoare, Esq.

"Jan. 28.

"Of one thing assure yourself, my visit to Rome has no tended to make me a Roman Catholic. This city has as many fountains and as much dirt, as many priests and as much wickedness, as any in the world. Not, however, but that there is a great deal to admire here. The spirit and stimulus with which they urge forward their religion is well worthy the imitation of Protestants. I was yesterday with Father Glover, one of five who rule the Jesuits, and he told me that their Propaganda Society for Missions gets 40,000*l.* a-year.

"Their mode of proceeding is this: one man engages to collect the subscription, amounting to a halfpenny per week, from ten persons; another, of a higher order, collects ten of these first, and so on; so that, in substance, the last person is answerable for the subscriptions of a thousand. Their plan, also, of Missions, is admirable; their missionaries in every country are instructed to look out for young men of talent and zeal, and likely to make good missionaries. These they import to Rome, and give them, in their Propaganda College, a first-rate education. They detain them there, if upon their first coming they understand the rudiments of Latin, &c., seven years, otherwise twelve, and then send them back as missionaries to the country from which they were taken. In this way, they have here at present under education 130 young men from all parts of the world, and recently discourses were delivered by them in forty-three different languages; and they seem a body of very intelligent and well-educated youths. No wonder, then, that their religion spreads as it seems to be doing. In 1825 they had but thirteen Roman

* This gang afterwards robbed Don Miguel, the ex-king of Portugal, as he was returning from a shooting excursion.

Catholics in Guiana, and now there are 5000! When the United States separated from Great Britain, they had one bishop, twenty priests, and a small Roman Catholic population. They have now 1,500,000 Roman Catholics! Surely these facts, which I collected from the head of the Jesuits, are both stimulating and instructive.

"Excuse me for putting all this down. I keep no journal, and only contrive to record the facts which I wish to remember, by inflicting them upon somebody in the shape of an epistle. I will only add, that I think we must have a grand college at Antigua, or somewhere, for youths from all the tribes of Africa.

"But now for another matter, on which I am really distressed for the want of your assistance. You advise me to visit the prisons. The fact is, I have been doing so. I thought it a shame for an old *prison-fancier* to be here with so much to be seen in this way, and not to devote some portion of his leisure to it. I therefore made a formal application to the Cardinal Minister, and almost immediately I received, to the astonishment of both Romans and English, a full permission to visit all the gaols, with the offer of every species of information; also all the hospitals, and all the places for education. To the two last the Cardinal offered to accompany me; but, as yet, I have not been to them, and it is very likely I shall not have time, but a party of us have gone the round of the prisons within Rome. To-morrow I visit the prison hospitals; and on Friday next I go to two large out-lying gaols. I shall then have completed this part of my work as far as Rome is concerned. There are some large prisons at a distance within the Papal dominions, and these I shall endeavour to see.

"The subject has attracted some attention. The Romans are mightily taken with it, and look upon the permission given to me as an unheard-of instance of liberality on the part of their Sovereign, and beg that I will avail myself of the opportunity and speak out. Three English noblemen have been amongst the number of my companions, and they are engaged to go with me on Friday. I was yesterday taken by one of them to Lord Shrewsbury, who tells me that Prince Borghese is inclined to establish a Prison Discipline Society. This is what I am at now.

"The state of the prisons is substantially this: they are very clean (to be sure they knew we were coming, and it must be remembered throughout that we were never able to take them by surprise), the rooms are very lofty, and the air always fresh and good; the provisions good in quality, and, I should think, sufficient. But one of the questions which I especially want you to give me an answer upon is, what, in addition to a ladleful of weak meat soup,—being in quantity, I should imagine, about three-quarters of a pint,—ought to be the allowance of bread for a prisoner, not in solitude and not employed?

"I now come to the defects. There is no such thing as classification, except, indeed, an attempt upon a small scale with regard to boys. Male prisoners of all ages, and for all crimes, from common assault to murder, are congregated together. In one instance there were 200 in one spacious room. There is no inspection whatsoever. There is no work for the great majority. The felons convicted and sentenced for long periods are worked in the public streets; but the remainder, tried and untried (and they amount to several hundreds), have nothing whatever to do. There is no regular gaol delivery; so that we met with several persons who had been detained before trial for upwards of a year. There is no school; and, with the exception of mass on the Sunday, and the repetition of a creed at nightfall, there is little effort made to convey religious instruction. These, I think, are the leading particulars. I should have said, however, that there are no chains, except for persons convicted of infamous crimes (answering to our felonies), and that there is neither the solitary nor the silent system.

"Now, then, I want you and Crawford to tell me what I should urge upon the Government. They have plenty of space about their gaols, so that there is room enough within the walls for any improvement; but the Government is poor. I find myself considerably at a loss from my inability to revive my old Prison Discipline lore. I am doing my best to get a book *which I think I once read;* it was written in the earlier stages of the Prison Discipline question, and is called, if I recollect right, 'Buxton on Prison Discipline.' If I get this it will be something; but I look far more to an immediate communication from you and Crawford.

"Neri, who I understand bears the title of Chancellor, and

is a very intelligent man, accompanied me through all the gaols, and has earnestly asked me to apply both to our Government and your Society, for any documents, plans, &c., which might be useful to a Government desiring to improve its prisons. So, if you please, you must get me what your Society can furnish, and Crawford must apply to the Marquis of Normanby, who will, I am sure, cheerfully lend his assistance in such a cause.

"Executions are rare, especially considering that murders are so plentiful. They told me that there were only two or three in a year. I ought to add, that books are not allowed to the prisoners, except by special permission. We saw, I think, but four or five in all the gaols.

"Not another moment have I, except to say that I heartily hope the boys enjoyed themselves as much in their Norfolk excursion as you and I used to do some thirty years ago."

To Edward N. Buxton, Esq.

"Jan. 30.

"I went yesterday with Richards to the Santo Spirito Hospital. It beats everything of the kind we have in England, and is a most noble institution. I measured one room, 170 yards long, and broad and lofty in proportion. There were four rows of beds, all superlatively clean, the ventilation perfect: another room as large above, and into each of these other rooms opened, all very spacious. It is capable of containing 1400 patients. There are 260 attendants, including 90 young physicians and surgeons. Any person, no matter of what country or of what religion, has a right to admission, and they have never been reduced to the necessity of sending any one away for want of room. The museum, with preparations of the human body in every form, the library, the lecture-rooms, &c. &c., are all admirable. They have thirteen resident chaplains. In short, everything was of huge dimensions, and in the highest order. Annexed to it was a criminal prison. There was also a madhouse, in which there was no solitary confinement, and only ten out of the whole number had strait waistcoats; and these were concealed under their clothes. They told us that one-fourth were annually dismissed as cured. There were also a Foundling Hospital, and an institution for the

girls who had been brought up in it. We saw 550 of these damsels all employed; and they have one curious plan. Anybody who wants a wife may order one at this shop. He has but to knock at the door, prove that he is respectable, and then they are singly paraded before him, and he has to pick out one to his liking: and, after a time, he carries her off, and with her a hundred crowns. What fine fun the ladies must have when any one comes to inspect them! The old abbess who accompanied us seemed highly amused by our diligent inquiries, especially on this point, and by the notes we took."

To Mrs. Johnson.

"Jan. 31. 1840.

"I must tell you about the dinner party at Lord Shrewsbury's yesterday. Except myself, and, I think, one more, there was no one who had not some mark of nobility in his coat. There were three ambassadors, some English noblemen, and about half-a-dozen princes,—twenty-four in all. I had scarcely entered the room before a Monsignor seized my hand and affected to kiss it; this was the Governor of Rome, who had given us the order of admission into all the prisons, hospitals, &c. He and I had a very interesting conversation, and as long a one as could well be expected, considering that he understood but two words of English, and I about three of Italian. Oh! this plague of languages! Next came up Prince Borghese, a very pleasing young man, who spoke a little English, and before whom I threw the proposal that he should become the chairman of a Prison Discipline Association. I was afterwards introduced to the Duc de Bordeaux, with whom I had some conversation on the slave-trade, and who expressed a wish to see my book. He also said mighty civil things. Poor fellow! he has a sweet expression of countenance; conceive Mrs. ——, with the same expression, and the same extreme clearness and cleanliness of skin, but with broader features, and a stouter person, and a heavier eye, and you have a good picture of the man.

"The Pretender's course is not a smooth one. If he has either extreme of character he may do well. Let him be excessively quiet, devoid of ambition and enterprise, that may do. Or let him be clever, daring, sagacious, ambitious, and com-

manding, and that, perhaps, will do. But, if there is any mixture in his composition,—if the least dash of adventure is coupled with his love of ease, or the least love of peace is mingled with his ambition, he will assuredly be a martyr. One cannot see the Duke without liking him, and wishing that he may have the good sense to steer clear of turbulent politics.

"At dinner I sat next to Lady Shrewsbury's sister, who told me everything about everybody. Among the rest, that that beautiful refined creature, the Princess Doria, actually goes every day in the Holy Week to wash the feet of the patients in the hospital. Well! well! good people may abhor the Roman Catholics if they please, and may feel, as I do, that they are led dangerously astray in their doctrines, but I never will join in setting them down as creatures devoid of deep feelings of religion, nor can I deny that there is humility and self-denial in such an act as I have described.

"I will now tell you a circumstance which, as I think Andrew Johnston was a party in the matter, will please him, as I confess it did me. Does he recollect that a clergyman named Nixon wrote to me from Ireland, complaining of the operation of the law, by which he and several others severely suffered; some losing a third, some half, and in two or three cases all their income? Does he recollect also that I took up the case, and got Lord Morpeth to insert a curing clause in the Irish Church Bill? That Bill, however, was thrown out; so I presumed that my effort had been fruitless. Not so, however; Nixon is here, and tells me that last year, when there was a new Church Bill, they reminded Morpeth of his promise—my clause was again introduced—it became law; a hundred clergymen in his diocese, and an equal proportion in all the other dioceses, were greatly benefited by it, and some very deserving men saved from complete ruin. This has really pleased me; I am glad that my slight effort has contributed to the comfort of these good people."

"Feb. 6.

"I had fixed to start early this morning snipe-shooting, but the rain has kept me in. I have been in Rome now nearly two months, and till a week past we had no rain; but when it does come it is in right down earnest. To walk along the streets then is as if there were people at every window throwing

buckets full of water at you. It is calculated that the number of days of rain at Rome is one-third less than in London, while the quantity of rain which actually falls here is one-third more.

"On Wednesday next I am engaged to the Prince of Musignano *, Bonaparte's nephew and heir, who, if we had been beaten at Waterloo, would probably have been king of the world. Not that I believe a word of this. I am well persuaded that there is a good Providence over England, and that, while she is employed in abolishing slavery and the slave-trade, sending out missions and Bibles, she is safe enough, both from Chartists and French. We have a great many friends here. In the mornings I have for some time been visiting the prisons, hospitals, &c., two or three days a week, and afterwards joining the ladies. On Tuesday I finished the prisons by seeing the San Michele. This is an asylum for orphans, old men and old women (several hundreds of each), and a very good one it is. Annexed to it was a female prison, 280 women in it; some imprisoned for life, others for periods from twenty years down to one. It is a wretched place, with next to no instruction. Of the 280 prisoners, only thirty could read. Why don't they elect me Pope? The army of priests should soon have something to do in the way of Infant Schools, &c. I am going to make a report to the Governor here, who has been excessively liberal in furnishing me with information; but I am sadly distressed for want of my book on Prisons.

"On Tuesday, as I said, after seeing the San Michele, I went with Lord Meath, Lord de Mauley, and Richards, to the church of San Augustino. The panels adjacent to the altar were covered with knives and pistols, which had been presented by robbers and murderers to the Virgin. I suppose you have heard of Spink's adventure; it made us look upon the knives with something more of interest. On Wednesday we went to the Corsini Palace: there are two *such* pictures there of Christ, with a crown of thorns; the one, the *Ecce Homo* of Guercino, — the other, in some respects still more touching, by Carlo Dolce. There was also the exquisite picture of the Virgin and Child by Murillo. I longed to steal it. Yesterday we saw a splendid collection at the Borghese Palace, and then we had a

* Now Prince de Canino.

long conversation with a Jesuit. I am very anxious to make myself master of their system of missions and of that of the Lyons Society. They seem to effect so much with means so limited; besides, I am persuaded they are upon the right principle. Their whole fight is for *native* missionaries. Their first act is to establish schools, in which, however, the instruction of the people is a very secondary object; the main purpose being to get a number of children, so far educated that they may pick out a few fitted by talent, disposition, and ready reception of Christianity, to be sent to Rome to receive a thorough education. Here they detain them, in some cases for seven, in others for twelve years, and send them back, well instructed as missionaries, to their own country.

"Now I must tell you that the Jesuits and I are playing a game of chess. They hope, I fancy, from my willingness to listen, from my eagerness to learn, from my ready laudation of all that I find reason to approve, that they will make me a convert to Popery. I, on the other hand, wish to make myself master of the secrets of the system which has rendered the Jesuit missions so eminently successful; and I tell them, without reserve, that this is my object. Nevertheless, they are vastly communicative.

"I was adverse to the Catholic religion when I left England, because I saw the error of their doctrines; but now, when I see in their practice the fruit of their system, and the depravity of the people that are so taught, I am still more Protestant than ever, if it be possible. To do them justice, preaching Christ is part of their practice, but the divine powers of our Saviour are shared with the Virgin Mary, and she takes not only the mother's but the lion's portion. Then their system of religion seems to be destitute of spirituality. Moreover, they seem to teach scarcely any morality. I found my wife yesterday announcing to our Italian maid the *novel* intelligence of the Ten Commandments. This girl had had an education, but apparently not a very profound one; for according, as she said, to the practice of Rome, she had only remained at school one week, in order to learn how to say mass.

"I have just been looking out of the window at the rain, the like of which I never saw, except at our pic-nic at Beckham, when, as some one described it, 'the drops were as thick as hail,

and every drop a pailful.' Collier (the Jesuit) told us of a speech of a priest in Maranham against slavery, of so powerful a nature, that after it the whole congregation liberated their slaves; and he said that priests in slave colonies had been the natural and enthusiastic protectors of the negroes. He also used or quoted a sentence which just hit the mark in my mind. Speaking of some one he said, 'He is of the body of the church, but not of its soul.' "

Among all the occupations and amusements of Rome Mr. Buxton's mind continually turned to his accustomed objects of interest. He thus writes to the Bishop of Calcutta on the 15th of February: —

"I need scarcely say that I feel deeply your promptitude in acting upon my letter relating to the Indian slaves. It was just like yourself, and reminded me of the Daniel Wilson who used to pour his whole heart into a good cause, and who, unvexed with the cautions and qualifications of ordinary men, threw the whole weight of his influence into the right scale. I have no doubt that this movement of yours will be attended with real advantage. I regret that I have little further intelligence to communicate to you. There was towards the conclusion of last session, so much party spirit, and such a nice balance of parties that Lushington thought it inexpedient to bring on the question of East Indian slavery. This discretion is scarcely in consonance with my disposition; I am more inclined for working in season or out of season, with the tide or against it. But on the other hand, Lushington is most true and faithful to the cause; knows far better than I do the temper of the present House of Commons, and is swayed by no other motive than a desire to act for the best. I send him a copy of your remarks, which cannot fail to be an encouragement to him. I expect to be in England in April, and you shall then know what is intended to be done; but assure yourself of this, the question will not be allowed to go to sleep. I learn that a grand Anti-slavery congress is to meet in London next June; and India will form one great branch of discussion.

"Now for another subject, the slave-trade. Again I must express the pleasure which your cordiality gave me. The Go-

vernment have, as I told you before, embraced and adopted my plan, and have acceded to our request that an expedition shall proceed up the Niger, in order to make treaties with the native powers, and to explore the country; and possibly to acquire territory, on which we may set the example of growing cotton. The expedition will sail in October. It will consist of three steamers of large dimensions, but of little draught of water. They will be commanded by Christian officers, some of them renouncing better prospects, and going in a true missionary spirit. I have considerably enlarged my 'Remedy,' and have especially dwelt on Christian education, and the elevation of the native mind. I do not enter here into particulars, because I have ordered a copy to be forwarded to you as soon as it is printed, and also a copy of the prospectus of our new Society, which is something akin to our old African Institution.

"I am vexed to tell you that Fernando Po is not as yet acquired; the negotiation is, however, still going on, and till that be settled, one way or the other, the Government object to my book being published. It is vexing enough thus to be kept in suspense, or rather it would be so if I did not feel a comforting assurance that there is a great and guiding hand regulating all our movements.

"I am happy to tell you that there is true harmony among the friends of the cause. Two of its principal supporters are Sir Robert Inglis and Lushington. We have many others, with the same views, belonging to the two great political parties. Our prospectus, too, will be signed by the Bishop of London, and by the heads of the Methodists, Baptists, Quakers, &c.

"It grieves me that we cannot agree upon one great and uniform system of religious instruction. Men will divide their affections between their religion and the denomination to which they belong. But what we cannot do as one great body must be effected by us as separate bodies. If you ask me what of all things I should best like, I answer, to see somewhere on the coast of Africa, in a healthy situation, a great Black College, for the education of native missionaries and schoolmasters for Africa, on the purest and most evangelical principles. That is what we want. Without Christianity all our efforts will be but idle dreams; and happy am I to say that this is the unanimous and avowed sentiment of our Society. If you like our

prospectus, I must ask you to permit me to enrol your name amongst our members."

To Edward N. Buxton, Esq.

"Feb. 15.

"On Thursday, after a busy morning, I went with Richards and had a thorough study of the forum, and stood on the very spot where Cicero pronounced his speeches against Catiline; and where, in view of the capitol, he uttered those noble words, 'Tum tu, Jupiter, quem Statorem hujus urbis atque imperii vere nominamus, hunc et hujus socios a tuis aris, ceterisque templis, et tectis urbis ac mœnibus, a vitâ fortunisque civium omnium arcebis, et æternis suppliciis vivos mortuosque mactabis.' This was in the senate, then held in the Temple of Concord. I also saw the place where the rostrum stood, from which the orators used to address the people at large; also the Temple of Antoninus, and the one which Augustus dedicated to Jupiter Tonans, in commemoration of his servant being killed at his side by a thunderbolt; also the well-preserved and beautiful remains of the Temple of Fortune. What scenes have passed within a stone's throw of the spot where I stood! There Romulus fled from the Sabines, and there he rallied, and built a temple to Jupiter Stator; there the Gracchi had their tumultuous meetings; there Antony made his oration over the dead body of Cæsar; and there the Roman senate issued their decrees affecting all the known world, which they say were designed, 'Parcere subjectis et debellare superbos,' which, properly translated, means 'to slaughter those who resist and make slaves of the rest.' I put down all this parade of learning (with much of which Richards has crammed me), with no view to your edification, still less for your amusement; but when one has more learning than one knows what to do with, it is very convenient to deposit it in a letter, where it is safe for future use without the trouble of carrying it about."

CHAPTER XXIX.

1840.

MR. RICHARDS' RECOLLECTIONS. — PRISONS AT CIVITA VECCHIA. — ITALIAN BANDITTI. —GASPARONI. —ILLNESS. —NAPLES. —POMPEII. — PROSPECT OF A WAR BETWEEN NAPLES AND ENGLAND. — EXCITEMENT AT NAPLES. — MR. BUXTON RETURNS TO ENGLAND.

SOME recollections of Mr. Buxton's stay at Rome are thus given by Mr. Richards, who was an inmate of his family at the time: —

"Our sojourn at Rome was a critical period of Mr. Buxton's life — the period between the full development of his 'Remedy' and the anxious moment of putting it to the test of experiment. He came to Rome fatigued and exhausted, and it was evident that the weight of care for Africa pressed heavily upon him. Often, amidst the ruins of Rome, whilst leaning upon my shoulder and surveying the objects around him with apparently the liveliest interest, he has suddenly become silent and abstracted, and, from the deep-drawn sighs that escaped him with painful frequency during these often protracted reveries, I soon discovered that the ruins on the shores of the Tiber did but transport his thoughts to the more frightful desolation of the Niger. Even then I had forebodings, that whatever might be the success of that expedition, its author at all events was doomed to be one of its martyrs; and I for one have a firm conviction that such has been the result. In fact, the subject needed a composition of 'sterner stuff' than his to bear its consideration. Nevertheless, the strife in his mind neither impaired its activity nor paralysed his efforts of usefulness, for almost immediately on his arrival in Rome he conceived, and proceeded at once to carry into execution, his plan of visiting the prisons and charitable institutions of that city. These were not visits of mere curiosity; they were concerted and arranged with a view to the suggestion of practical improvements where necessary, as well

as to the acquisition of new ideas upon matters which had long occupied his thoughts; and in carrying out this, which he apprehended to be his present duty, he had often to struggle painfully against the prostrating effects of bodily languor and mental oppression. I had the privilege of being his constant companion in his visits, and deeply interesting it was to watch the satisfaction and delight which he derived from whatever was excellent in these institutions, and the intense sympathy with which he examined the state of the inmates of those dungeons. Clear it was that his was no capricious sentiment in favour of one colour or race, but a deep feeling for suffering, degraded humanity, under whatever circumstances. Whilst engaged in this pursuit, by which he seemed to endeavour to divert his mind for a time from its engrossing care, he likewise often entered, *con amore*, into the field of classical antiquities. He delighted to revive his classical recollections, and often they awoke at his call, most aptly and successfully. I cannot easily forget our first walk through the Forum, nor the enthusiasm with which he surveyed the campagna from the tower on the Capitol, now and then illustrating with great zest, from the Roman poets, the objects of interest which were pointed out to him. Juvenal was his favourite poet, who appeared to hold in your father's estimation the same place among the ancients as Dryden among the moderns; the peculiar raciness of their style being exactly congenial to his taste. From my first acquaintance with him, I had been struck with his partiality for this poet, an apt quotation from whom, whether cited by himself or another, would always give him the highest delight; and now, amidst the still-surviving shadows of Roman manners, his references to the keen satirist were frequent. Another minor characteristic of him, which I had before observed, but which I now saw brought out into stronger light, was his great fondness for romantic incident and adventure. He would listen, with almost a boyish interest, to the tales of heroic daring, and lawless adventure and enterprise, which are still rife among the Apennines, and he never lost an opportunity of collecting the stories which any known locality might afford.

"In now bringing him more distinctly before my mind, I am filled with admiration and love; and I esteem it the highest privilege of my life that I was acquainted with him, that I

knew something of his inner mind, and, above all, that I was honoured with his friendship."

To Samuel Hoare, Esq.

"Rome, March 3.

"I have had occasion to remember the excursion to the prison at St. Albans, which you and I took long ago, when, on Monday morning, Richards and I were trotting along in a diligence to Civita Vecchia. The gaol there, which was the object of our journey, is an old and strong fortress close by the sea, and contains 1364 desperate-looking criminals, all for the most aggravated offences. I am sure you never saw such a gang of malefactors, or such a horrid dungeon. We went, first, into a vaulted room, with a low ceiling, as I measured it, thirty-one yards long, twenty-one broad. There was light, but obscure. A good deal of the room was taken up by the buttresses which supported the arches. The noise on our entrance was such as may be imagined at the entrance of hell itself. All were chained most heavily, and fastened down. The murderers and desperate bandits are fixed to that spot for the rest of their lives; they are chained to a ring, fastened to the end of the platform, on which they lie side by side, but they can move the length of their chain on a narrow gangway. Of this class, there were upwards of 700 in the prison; some of them famed for a multitude of murders; many, we are told, had committed six or seven; and, indeed, they were a ghastly crew, — haggard, ferocious, reckless assassins. I do not think that the attendant gaoler very much liked our being there. A sergeant, in uniform, was ordered to keep close by me; and I observed that he kept his hand upon his sword, as we walked up the alley between the adjacent platforms.

"There was a fourth room at some distance, and our guide employed many expedients to divert us from going there. * * * This was worse than any of the others: the room lower, damper, darker, and the prisoners with, if possible, a more murderous look. * * * The Mayor afterwards told us, that he, in his official capacity, knew that there was a murder every month among the prisoners. I spoke to a good many of them, and, with one exception, each said that he was condemned for murder or stabbing. I will tell you one short conversation: 'What

are you here for?' said I to a heavy-looking fellow, lying on his back at the end of the room. He made no answer; but a prisoner near him, with the sharp features and dark complexion of an Italian, promptly said, 'He is here for stabbing' (giving a thrust with his hand to show how it was done). 'And why is he in this part of the prison?' 'Because he is incorrigible.' 'And what were you condemned for?' 'For murder.' 'And why placed here?' '*Sono incorrigibile.*' * * * In short, this prison combines together, in excess, all the evils of which prisons are capable. It is, as the Mayor said, a sink of all the iniquity of the state. The Capuchins certainly preach them a sermon on the Sunday, and afford them an opportunity of confession; of which, if the prisoners avail themselves, the priests must have enough to do. The sight of it has kindled in my mind a very strong desire that the old Prison Discipline Society should make a great effort, and visit all the prisons of the world. I had hoped that sound principles of prison discipline had spread themselves more widely; but I now fear that there are places, and many of them, in the world, in which it is horrible that human beings should live, and still more horrible that they should die."

"March 4.

"Having in yesterday's letter given you a heavy and dreary account of the prisons here, I must now furnish you with a history of some of their inmates. In the citadel of Civita Vecchia, Gasparoni and his gang are confined, and have been so for the last fourteen years. There are many renowned robbers in this country, but none so celebrated as this Gasparoni; and I had the honour of an interview of two hours with him and his band. He is a very fine-looking fellow, about five feet eleven high, with as strong and *brick-wall* an arm as ever I felt, except, perhaps, General Turner's; he wore an old velvet coat, which had seen service with him, and a large peaked hat. There was nothing ferocious in the expression of his countenance. I am going to have his picture taken, a compliment which his appearance well deserves; for he is the *beau-ideal* of a Robin Hood or Rob Roy. By his side there was a fiendish-looking wretch, who plagued us with his interruptions. This fellow is said to have joined the band chiefly from his love of human blood, and his post was that of executioner.

"Gasparoni was very communicative; only that, either from the modesty which belongs to great men, or some latent hope of pardon, he greatly underrates his own exploits. For example, to my question, 'How many people have you murdered?' he replied, 'I cannot exactly recollect, somewhere about sixty!' whereas it is notorious that he has slaughtered at least double the number. Indeed, the Mayor of Civita Vecchia assured me, that he had received authentic information of 200; but he believed that even that number was still below the mark. This man, according to his own account, when he was but a young lad, killed a person in a quarrel and fled to the mountains, where he was joined by a few young men of similar character. Before he was twenty years old he had committed ten murders, and was at the head of a band of fifteen or twenty robbers, which afterwards amounted to about thirty of his own body-guard; but there were two or three other bands under separate commanders, one of whom was his brother; he, however, was lord paramount.

"It is incontestable that he kept a district of country of at least one hundred miles in circumference, between Rome and Naples, in the utmost terror and subjection. Those proprietors who were not slain by him fled the country, and were obliged to receive such a modicum of rent as the tenants who compounded with Gasparoni chose to pay; but the black mail which he levied was not extravagant. The Government at first offered 200 crowns for his head. This mounted up at last to 3000 crowns, and that was the fixed price for many years, and a thousand soldiers were regularly employed in hunting him. 'But how then,' said I, 'did you escape?' 'That you will never understand,' he replied, 'till you see the rocks and precipices that are there. I and my men knew every turn; we have often been close to the soldiers, and let them pass us, when they had no notion they had such near neighbours.' Gasparoni had many conflicts with the military, in which he was uniformly successful; but in one affair he received a ball in the lower part of his neck, the scar of which he showed us. He described one conflict, in which, with ten or twelve of his men, he beat off, as he said, thirty-soldiers; but the ill-looking scoundrel by his side said there were full sixty.

"Gasparoni's head-quarters were at Sonnino, where his wife

and children resided, and where the whole population were devoted to him. This town had obtained so evil a reputation, that on his surrender the Pope made a great effort to get it rased to the ground, but could not get the assent of the proprietor. I was interested by learning from him that the haunts he chiefly occupied for the purpose of observing the road were the three little towns perched on the rock, and shining like silver, Cora, Norma, and Sermoneta, which had so much attracted my admiration when I was at Appii Forum. He told me that he had spent a large proportion of his plunder upon spies at Rome, by whom he was made acquainted with the plans designed for his capture, and who also told him what persons coming along the road were worth catching; if emissaries were sent for the purpose of entrapping him, he was forewarned, and the vengeance he took on them was terrible. He crucified one of these men, and wrote underneath, 'Thus Gasparoni treats all spies.' He cut out the heart and liver of another, and sent them back to the man's widow.

"If any persons in the towns were active against him, he always found means to punish them. If their offence was not very deep, they received a letter ordering them to pay on a certain day, at a certain place, 1000 or 2000 scudi; and such was the terror of his name, that these demands were generally obeyed. Some of the magistrates in the strong town of Terracina, thinking themselves secure within their walls, ventured to incur his displeasure. Soon after the boys of the chief school, while taking a walk near the gates, were surprised by him and his men, and carried away to the mountains; and a message was sent to the parents of almost all, fixing the amount of ransom, upon the payment of which they were restored. But the children of those who had exasperated him were not allowed to escape; their heads were sent back in a sack. Of the truth of this dreadful story there can be no doubt. A friend of mine asked Gasparoni about it; he admitted that he had seized the children, but said nothing about the murders. The gentleman said to him, 'I have heard more than this; I have been told you cut off the heads of three of them.' 'It is false,' said Gasparoni, 'it was but two.'

"Mr. Jones, the banker here, told me that last October he saw a man who had been one of this party of boys, and who

described to him the whole scene of their capture and of their residence in a cavern among the mountains. This man actually saw Gasparoni plunge his knife into the body of his two victims. Mr. Jones also told us that he had travelled through the country where Gasparoni and his men used to hide themselves; but such was still the terror of his name, and the painful associations connected with it, that he could not get respectable persons to speak on the subject, nor could he prevail upon any one to be his guide to their cavern. The person who when a boy had been carried to the mountains was the most communicative. As Mr. Jones was walking with him on a little terrace adjacent to the walls of Terracina, he stopped at the corner of a wall and said, 'Such a one, an officer of the town, had rambled thus far at mid-day; Gasparoni sprang out of that hedge, struck him with his knife, and here he fell dead.'

"You must know that Gasparoni, according to his own account, was especially merciful. He protested that he had never murdered merely from the love of blood; but he seemed to think there was no harm in killing, and admitted that he had killed many who came as spies to entrap him, or who presumed to make resistance. Rumour says, however, that he was by no means so squeamish. A friend of mine came up to a diligence which had just been plundered, and found that the whole party, including several priests, had all been wounded, although none of them mortally. They said that the first intimation they had of their danger was a volley from the whole gang, and my friend took out of the lining of the carriage a whole handful of shot of all sizes.

"It is odd enough that Gasparoni is very religious now; he fasts, not only on Friday, but adds a supererogatory Saturday. He told me that he repented of his former life; but what it was he regretted I could not well make out, for he expressly justified the occasions in which he had proceeded to extremities with spies or travellers who resisted him. But curious as his theology now is, it is still more strange that, according to his own account, he was always a very religious man. I asked him whether he had fasted when he was a bandit? He said, 'Yes.' 'Why did you fast?' said I. '*Perche sono della religione della Madonna.*' 'Which did you think was worst, eating meat on a Friday or killing a man?' He answered without hesitation, 'In my case

it was a crime not to fast; it was no crime to kill those who came to betray me.' With all his present religion, however, he told the Mayor of the town the other day, that if he got loose, the first thing he would do would be, to cut the throats of all the priests: and the Mayor said in this he perfectly believed him, and if he were now to break out he would be ten times worse than ever. One fact, however, shows some degree of scrupulosity. The people of the country bear testimony that he never committed murder on a Friday!

"The Mayor said the only good thing he ever knew him really do was this: he took an Austrian officer and his newly-married bride and carried them up to the hills. His gang stripped her of all her clothes and proposed to kill her, but this he resisted, and ultimately sent her and her husband back in safety. It is some deduction from his humanity on this occasion to hear, as I did from another quarter, that the Austrian general, hearing of the capture, sent word to Gasparoni, that if any injury was done to his officer, or if he was not directly restored, he would send 4000 men against him, who should be quartered in the village, and on his friends, till he should be taken.

"Gasparoni told me that he had never taken an Englishman to the mountains. I asked him why? rather expecting that he would reply with some gross flummery; but he answered very simply, 'Because I never had the luck to catch one!' He assured me that he had not in all taken above fifteen or twenty persons to the hills; but the current report makes the number upwards of two hundred. From these he was inexorable in extorting the precise sum that he fixed upon as their ransom. It is well known that he obtained from a Neapolitan nobleman, who is still living, 4000 scudi. The Mayor told me that an intimate friend of his was captured by him, and the sum demanded was his weight in silver; his friends, being unable to pay this, at the end of a fortnight received his head neatly packed up in a basket! All, however, who did return, bear testimony to their good fare and to his good humour, and his courtly and somewhat delicate conduct, while they were his guests in the cavern.

"One incident which was related to me is in part attested by many living witnesses. A wedding was celebrated in a part of the country at some distance from his haunt. When dinner

was placed on the table, a man fully armed, but unknown to the guests, stalked in and seated himself by the side of the bride, with a kind of trumpet between his knees. The guests somewhat startled, showed little disposition to eat; and the bridegroom told the intruder that 'it was not usual for a stranger to take the post he occupied.' He replied, 'I am no stranger, I am Gasparoni. I am a friend to the bride; eat, and be at your ease, or you will make me her enemy.' It is said his terrible name rather quenched the merriment and appetite of the party. At length Gasparoni sounded his horn; two troops came rushing down the hill and seized the bride, Gasparoni saying, 'I told you I was her friend, and I show it by taking her away with me.' It would be well if the story stopped here, but it is said that she was afterwards murdered.

"You will wish to know how he was taken; he became such a nuisance that, partly from the strength of the military parties which were constantly sent in pursuit of him, and partly from the diminution of traffic on the road, his funds became short, and he could not pay his spies. The Government then took the decisive measure of seizing all his relations and friends, and those who supplied him with food and ammunition; in other words, the whole population of Sonnino. Without money and half starved, unable to obtain intelligence, and surrounded on all sides by troops, he was on the point of being captured, when he listened to the proposals of a priest, who, as it is said, went beyond the authority given him, and offered him a full pardon and a pension; upon which he and his comrades surrendered: and hence it was that I had the opportunity of seeing him, surrounded by twenty-one ruffians, the remainder of his band. I asked him which of them was the man he chiefly trusted; in other words, who was his lieutenant? he answered, 'My gun only was my lieutenant; *that* never failed to obey me.'

"He complains loudly of the violation of the promise made to him, and still seems to dream of being liberated. He was the son of a herdsman, and cannot read or write; but his little demon-like executioner who stood by his side is said to be a tolerable scholar. He amuses himself by making caps, of which I bought three. I have hardly done justice to his appearance: he is greatly superior in this respect to those around him. He has the air of a chieftain, and though his look is very command-

ing there is something far from unpleasing in his face; it is decidedly handsome in features, but the expression also is gentle and intellectual. While speaking with me, he looked me full in the face the whole time. I told him that I intended to have his likeness taken for a particular purpose, of which you shall know more another time. He said he had no objection. I told him that the painter would not be able to come for some time. 'No matter,' said he, 'let him suit himself, he will always find me at home.'

"It is quite astonishing how much terror was attached to his name. One proof of its surviving even to this time I witnessed when I was shooting at Appii Forum; for at the distance of every three or four miles on the road there were military stations or huts, in some of which they still keep soldiers.

"By this time I think you must be pretty sick of robber stories. But I must inflict on you one more.

"An Englishman arrived here this year who could scarcely speak a word of Italian. He heard, of course, not a little about assassins, robbers, and such like, and prudently resolved never to go alone, and never to be out after dusk. Both these resolutions were fated to fail. He dined with a friend near Rome, and was obliged to walk home alone the same night: this looked terrific before dinner; but a few glasses of Marsala and a few more of Champagne braced up his courage, and away he started about ten o'clock. As he walked briskly along in the darkness he came full butt against a man. He was startled, and the tales he had heard recurred to his recollection; but the man passed on, and in a short time our hero felt for his watch and found that it was gone. Then the good wine came into play: he rushed back, seized the rascal, and vehemently demanded, 'Montre! Montre!' The robber trembled, and reluctantly yielded up the watch.

"On reaching home he recounted, with no little exultation, his heroic exploit, and vowed that, if the rest of the world would behave as he had done, robbery would cease in Rome in a fortnight. When he had finished his oration his sister said, 'All this is very strange; for after you went out I saw your watch hanging in your room, and there it is now.' Sure enough there it was. So it appeared, past all dispute, that, instead of being robbed, he had himself committed a robbery!"

To Edward N. Buxton, Esq.

"March 9.

"I do not recollect that I ever read a paper which gave me more thorough satisfaction than Lord John's letter about the slave trade.

"The project of overturning the slave trade by civilisation, Christianity, and the cultivation of the soil, is no longer in my hands; the Government have adopted the principle and taken the task upon themselves; and if it fail for want of energetic working, they are to blame. In short, I feel much more a gentleman at large than I did before I read that letter. Pray tell all this to Lushington. I should be the most ungrateful of men if I whispered a complaint of not having heard from him for some little time. He has been most generous in writing; but I hunger for one more letter from him, to be received by me at Naples, to cheer me on my journey homeward, and to give me a clear understanding how matters stand.

"Yesterday we went to the Palatine Hill; we saw where the House of Romulus stood, and that of Numa, and the Temple of Vesta, and the old Senate House of Tullus Hostilius, all grouped together in the little vale below us; and close by there were the Coliseum, and the Forum, and a grove of pillars, and a swarm of temples. * * *

"To-day I have been in the house of the heir of the Cæsars and the successor of St. Peter. The Pope is a civil, lively little gentleman. Our party consisted of the Hanoverian Ambassador, Baron Kesner; a Danish Count just returned from the Holy Land; an English officer; Richards, in Kesner's court dress; Fowell, Charles, and myself. He gave us an audience of upwards of three-quarters of an hour.

"He was very inquisitive to know what I thought of the Roman prisons. Kesner (who understands neither English nor Italian) interpreted for us, and I heard him say for me rather more than I liked of '*contentissimo.*' This was not exactly what I wanted to express; so I referred to Richards, and desired him to speak for me. I praised everything I could think of which deserved commendation; such as the Chancellor of the Gaols (Signor Neri), the Boys' Prison, the San Michele Hospital, and the liberality of the Government in giving me free access and

full information; to all of which he very gracefully replied, that, if gentlemen from motives of benevolence took the trouble to visit their institutions, the least he could do was to afford facilities, furnish documents, and listen attentively to every suggestion.

"Well, having praised wherever I could, I gently intimated that the Roman gaols in general wanted a good deal of purification; and that I felt bound in honesty to tell him that two, namely, the female prison of San Michele, and the great gaol of Civita Vecchia, were to the last degree bad, and called aloud on those who are influenced, whether by policy, humanity, or religion, for a thorough reformation. To all this he seemed very attentive and well disposed. We then had a long conversation about the slave trade and slavery. He seemed not a little proud of what he had done, and I told him of the satisfaction which his Bull had given in England on the score of the slave trade, at which it was pointed; and also with reference to slavery and the maltreatment of Aborigines, which it indirectly hit. He called the slave trade an infamous traffic, said that charity was the soul of religion, and that, whilst forbidding all cruelty, it expressly prohibited that which was inflicted on the human race; and he concluded with saying, and laughing aloud at his own speech, 'Thanks to me, if you please, but no thanks to Portugal.' In short, he expressed himself capitally. Having disposed of my own two pets, Prisons and Slave Trade, I felt constrained to put in a word relative to some atrociously cruel practices here, in the treatment of lambs by the butchers. He hardly seemed ripe for this; but Richards stuck to it manfully: and the matter ended by my giving him A——'s paper on the subject, and his promising to give it his best consideration. *

"Thus, very amicably, ended our interview, and we proceeded to Cardinal Lambruschini, the chief secretary of state, where we had as gracious a reception, and we repeated much that we had stated to the Pope. To-morrow we go to Tivoli."

* Some months afterwards, Mr. Buxton heard that his representations on this subject had been attended to. He wrote to Miss Gurney, through whom the news reached him, "I must thank you for your letter about the Pope and the lambs; it really was an achievement. I never see one galloping about a field now without thinking of the benefactress of lambs. What a thing it is to have rescued such a multitude from torture! I do believe there is much good in Pope Gregory after all; it is capital when great people will respond to good advice."

"March 19.

"I have been employed of late in preparing my report about the prisons for the Pope, and in having it translated into Italian. To-morrow morning, Lord Meath, Lord De Mauley, Lord Farnham, and two or three others, meet here to have it read to them, and I hope to get it completed and presented before I go to Naples.

"Trew tells me that the book is published; and I have seen it advertised in the newspapers. If you wish to know what feeling in our minds this intelligence has called forth, turn to the 90th Psalm, 17th verse, Prayer-Book version.* If it were not that we have good reason for assuring ourselves of His aid who can make all things bend to His will, we should think any hope for Africa, after so many centuries of such deep debasement, chimerical in the last degree. As it is, we are in right good heart, and feel that, however the instruments may err or fail, the great Actor and Leader will give the victory to His own work.

"On Wednesday last, after some hesitation on account of the weather, all our party started for Tivoli; the distance about twenty miles, which was increased three or four more I suppose by going round by Hadrian's villa. About eleven o'clock the day cleared up, and was beautifully fine, without being too hot. Hadrian certainly chose a noble situation for his country-house; and the remains are so perfect that one can see with some degree of certainty where he slept, where he dined, and how he managed things generally. Strewed about his grounds, in various directions, are his imitations of all the edifices in Greece and elsewhere which were celebrated in his day. He had travelled a great deal, and, instead of taking a picture, as we do, of what he admired, he built it over again.

"We then proceeded to Tivoli, ordered our dinner, and took the smaller excursion, in order to see the water-falls; which would be very fine if the people would let them alone. But, as in England we sometimes see pains taken to make artificial cascades look natural, so here, at great cost, they have contrived to give a spruce artificial air to the work of nature. As we

* "Prosper thou the work of our hands upon us, O prosper thou our handy-work."

went along the ridge of the hill opposite the town, the river created by the water-falls being between us and it, we saw the spot where Horace must have drawn the landscape; the noisy Albunea was no other than the Sibyl herself, and her temple stood in the inn-yard we had quitted. The 'præceps Anio' made himself known in accents so intelligible as almost to deafen us. We were in the Tiburtine grove, and the 'uda mobilibus pomaria rivis' was a sketch to the very life; some forty minor water-falls were throwing their spray over the fruit-trees scattered among them. I, too, as well as Horace, should wish for no better resting-place for my old age, provided there were no malaria, and that all the people could be taught to speak English. Some of the party slept at Tivoli, and went the next day to Horace's farm, where, they say, no lady has been for the last ten years."

"March 20.

"The weather has now become chilly and boisterous. I am glad we are not at Naples. To-day the parties I spoke of have read and approved my Prison Report, and we went to Prince Borghese to urge him to take up the subject of prison discipline. Afterwards, by way of recreation, Richards and I went to explore two palaces. The day was dark, and I did not take much to the pictures; but in the corner of the garden of the Colonna Palace there stood what was merely the frieze (or rather a bit of it) of the temple which Heliogabulus erected to his divine self. This bit of ornament consisted of two fragments of marble, of astonishing magnitude, and curiously carved. What must the temple have been, judging it by this minor part? and what has become of the rest of the edifice? and what a magnificent people these Romans were? their works, indeed, were wonderful. But, after all, the reflection which most naturally presents itself to my mind when I look at such gigantic ruins, turns in this direction—here is deathless fame! here immortal glory! here the proudest monuments of the great! and this is all that remains of them.—But I am sure it is time to say good night, or I and my amanuensis shall terminate our descriptions in a gentle slumber."

"March, 1840.

"On Friday we started with a large party, the Foxes, Lord de Mauley, Captain Back, Captain Franks, and Mr. Silvertop,

for Veii, the great enemy of Rome in her early existence. We saw the place where the whole family of the Fabii, three hundred in number, were put to the sword. It is in a very beautiful country, and the land, though very rich, hardly cultivated at all. We were told that in growing wheat in England one bushel produces seven; in this territory one bushel produces thirty-two, and yet there was hardly any land under the plough. * * *

"On Saturday, the Chancellor Neri called upon me, bringing four splendid medallions as a present from Cardinal Tosti, given as a memorial of my visit to his Institution for old people and orphans, and to the prison annexed to it. I am afraid I shall soon grow somewhat conceited, for I never before was treated with so much distinction as at Rome. Not only the English, but the Italians, have paid me all manner of civilities. I am pleased to have got these medals; yet it is somewhat awkward, as in return I shall have soundly to abuse the said prison, which is the worst I have seen in Rome. In the afternoon I walked with Mr. Ellison, and saw some splendid views of the city, particularly of the Coliseum. We went into the garden of the Armenian College; the monks of that persuasion come from Mount Libanus and talk Syriac. I was much struck with the beauty of their cast of countenance. They told me that their own country was pre-eminently fertile, and the climate most healthy, but that terrible insecurity prevailed: few, they say, die by disease, multitudes by the knife. * * *

"I do not think I can fish up another morsel of Roman news for you, unless you may like to hear of one of our acts in visiting the prisons. When we went among the debtors we were desirous of giving them some relief, for they were sufficiently wretched; but where was the use of scattering a few shillings amongst them to be spent in drink? In this dilemma, Lord De Mauley suggested that we should select some deserving man and liberate him, and we found a subject exactly suited to our purpose, in the shape of a sensible-looking tailor, with a wife and ten children, who, just as his harvest was beginning, and as he was anticipating a flood of gold from the produce of his needle in preparing for the Carnival, was clapped into gaol by a malicious creditor for 2*l.* 10*s.*, with the certainty of remaining there for a year and a day. For this 'ninth part of a

man' we sent, told him our whim, and ordered him to begone. After a most loving and graceful kiss of our hands away he started, the happiest tailor in the Roman dominions."

"March 25.

"We have had several stinging cold days, and at this moment, and for the last hour, it has been snowing as hard as ever I saw it do in England. This morning the boys and girls set off for Grotta Ferrata, to see a Roman fair in the mountains, about eleven miles distant; but they very discreetly returned when the snow began. I am very proud to say that, after a fortnight's very cold and treacherous weather, and a great deal of wind, my dear wife is perfectly well; for which we ought to be, and are, very thankful.

"I protest at this moment the boys are erecting a gigantic snow man in the court before us, and the material is coming down merrily. Our intention had been to start for Naples on Monday, but the report is current that we are going to war with the Neapolitans upon the sulphur question. I do not believe a word of it; but as I have no taste for the possibility of being cannonaded by our own fleet, and pillaged by the insurgent mobility of Naples, we shall probably keep away from that town for a few days till we hear the truth. The worst of this is, that I fear my letters are gone there, and I am hungry for news of my bairns and my book. In our way to Naples we are going to visit the recesses of the mountains, till very recently the dens and fastnesses of the banditti. I understand that, although it is a charming country, it is seldom visited, save and except by those who were carried there by the robbers, and who probably at that moment did not pay much attention to the picturesque. Rippingille goes with us; so, I believe, does Sir George Back. H. and A. will wait for us upon the road, but all the young and foolish of our party will go to the hills, and a wild romantic excursion we expect to have. I sent my Report on the Prisons and Institutions of Rome to one of our Italian friends who had visited them with me, and asked him to sign it. His hair stood on end at the bare idea of this proposal. 'What!' said he to the gentleman who took the Report to him, 'am I to concur in telling my Government the plain truth? Am I in the plainest manner to expose the errors and evils of their system? There is not a Roman subject in the whole state who dares with the

most cautious circumlocution to hint a fiftieth part of what Mr. Buxton states to them of their mistakes. He speaks as plainly as if he was speaking to his brother! I see how it is, Mr. Buxton thinks he is in England, and he has no notion that there is any harm in telling the Government that they ought to be all hanged. But we live under a different sky. Speaking plain truth to the authorities is quite an unheard-of thing at Rome; and any one who ventured on so unpalatable a task would assuredly be ruined.* The Government, when they admitted him, never dreamt that he would venture to find fault. He was expected to see a little, and compliment a great deal; and there the matter was to end. To tell you the truth, if I had known that this kind of searching inquiry was intended, I should not have dared to accompany him.' Much more of the same kind followed, and it appears clear enough that the Government will stare terribly when they read my Report, although its chief defect is that it is too complimentary.

"There are a good many double snipes here at this time. We had two for dinner yesterday, and I dare say Aubin will shoot some to-day. Some time between the 15th of April and the 10th of May there is a most wonderful inroad of quails, and the whole country turns out against them. Sir Thomas Cullum told me, that on the 2nd of May, two or three years ago, he found upon inquiry that duty had been paid on 80,000. Pretty well for one day! And I remember that an officer who during the war was quartered upon the coast, told me, that the ordinary ration of a common soldier was *six quails* a day. I rather hope to have one day's shooting at the fellows. * * * The snow is now melted, but it is cloudy."

At this juncture Mr. Buxton was attacked by very serious indisposition, in which his breathing was for the first time painfully affected. He was, however, well enough to write on the 1st of April, to Mrs. Edward Buxton and Mrs. Johnston.

* The head of one of the Institutions informed Mr. Buxton that the letter he had received from the Government, directing him to throw the Institution open to his inspection, contained these expressive words, "show him every thing, *but with due caution.*"

"My dearest Daughters,

"I think you will like to have a few lines from myself on my birthday. I make little doubt that your affectionate anxiety has exaggerated my late indisposition, and that you will be looking out eagerly for the post. I am better. I am positive upon that point. I am also sure that I have been very unwell, and that I have been nursed with the most loving care. There ends all my certainty. I have no clear notion what my malady has been; I have had next to no fever; very little of what, correctly speaking, can be called pain; and I believe not much danger; but, on the other hand, I have suffered a great deal from weariness, from headache, from want of sleep, and from great dffiiculty of breathing.

"The result is that, as Dryden says,

> 'The thin chilled blood is curdled in my veins,
> And scarce a shadow of the man remains.'

* * * But really when I began my letter I had no intention of speaking to you about this trumpery. I wanted to tell you that I am, I believe, decidedly on the mend; that my birthday has been far from an unpleasant one, and that I look upon this illness as one of my many mercies.

"As soon as I felt that I was in for a bout, I remembered Andrew's capital observation, 'Begin at once to prepare for the worst, act as if you foresaw it would be fatal, set your house in order.' In some slight measure, and no more, I have been able to do this, and have realised the scene which, if we escape it now, must soon occur. One cannot be too thankful for this kind of warning, and for the plainness with which, after preaching to us upon the prodigious difference between things temporal and things eternal, it says, with all emphasis, 'Set your affections on things above.' That is the way that it gives a shake and a tumble to darling objects and cherished schemes, and says to us peremptorily, 'Away with such trifles, there is no time for them.'"

"April 2.

"I got so far yesterday, when my wife came in and tyrannically prohibited me from writing another word. But to-day I may pronounce myself decidedly better. All my most important enemies are subdued. What remains is very great debility; and my brace of doctors talk much about a constitution 'vehemently

exhausted,' and seem to think me, at my best, good for little more than to read a newspaper by way of study, ride three miles by way of exercise, and these duties performed, to spend the rest of my time in pure idleness.

"There is, and always has been to me, something very pleasant in illness, — in having your mother nursing me all day and all night. * * * There is no poetry like that of the Bible. Where can we find an expression so forcible, yet so exactly just, as that of David? — 'His love to me was wonderful, passing the love of women.' * * * Most women are capable of this devoted love, but then there is often, be it spoken with reverence, a take-off, or a drawback. As Sir Walter says, she is an angel in the hours of care and grief, but

'in hours of ease
Uncertain, coy, and hard to please;'

whereas mine is not better on special occasions than in the every-day routine of affectionate duty. Every one has been most agreeable, affectionate, and dutiful: the girls have had a hard time of it, for I generally keep them reading half the night."

To Edward N. Buxton, Esq.

"Mola di Gaeta, one day's journey from Naples,
"April 10. 1840.

"I wrote to you last on the 1st of April, in the worst of my illness. We left Rome as soon as I was able to move. I suffered not a little from exhaustion in going up stairs at Albano, but I have been improving ever since, and am now nearly as well as ever. * * *

"We loitered some days at Albano, and then proceeded to this place by very slow journeys. Judging by the glimpses which we have occasionally had, it is a most lovely country, but cloud, rain, and mist, have been our all but constant companions. There is now, immediately below us, a garden covered with orange and lemon trees, looking quite yellow with the fruit, the Mediterranean beating against its wall. There, to the right, jutting into the sea, is the town of Gaeta, with the bold hill which joins it to the main land. To the left are Vesuvius and

the Bay of Naples. We have been here two hours, and we have had one walk of two minutes. We hardly know what kind of reception we shall meet with at Naples, as we have learned that a messenger has gone to our fleet at Malta ordering it up. So do not be surprised if you happen to see in the Gazette that the girls are killed by cannon-balls on the battlements. Our plan is, at all events, to take a peep at Naples, and to be off again in a moment if we see occasion for it. I must now get ready for dinner, for they are come in half-drowned.

"We are just told that our lives would not be worth twopence apiece if we went to Naples now.

"I must not forget to tell you that my prison labours terminated happily the day before I left Rome. My Report was addressed to Cardinal Tosti, and it seemed to us rather a good omen that, on the following day, we saw his carriage standing near the door of the Prison for Females; and before my departure I received a letter from him, promising in the handsomest manner to attend to my suggestions, and thanking me for them.

"My illness alone has prevented us from paying a visit to Sonnino, the town of robbers. As you enter it, I am told, you see the prison ornamented with fourteen cages, containing the heads of so many bandits; if you go into the streets and speak to three men, the chance is that one out of the number has been upon the hills, and that two out of the three are of the lineage of some predatory hero. It is, however, not easy to get at information; the Government cannot bear the subject to be mentioned; the guilty, therefore, who have been conditionally pardoned, dare not speak, and the others who were their prey have too many painful associations to make the subject agreeable. Two Englishmen who have travelled there tell me that if you ask a question of any respectable person on these dark transactions, he usually utters not a word in reply, or if he says anything it is something like this, — 'Every stone hereabouts has its own bloody tale to tell.'"

"Naples, April 13. Monday.

"We reached this place on Saturday night, and our terrors of bombardment, for some of our party did tremble, have subsided. Our fleet just poked its nose into the Bay on Sunday morning, but sailed away to Salerno, a port some ten miles

distant, where it waits, I suppose, the turn which negotiations may take. I have seen our Minister, Mr. Temple, and he gave me to understand that we may safely remain till he throws out a hint to the contrary. Nothing can be more lovely than this day; my window looks towards the bay, and it glitters so as quite to dazzle me. Beautiful as it is, it is singularly like Weymouth. * * * Instead of finishing my letter to you this morning, I was tempted by good company and fine weather to look about me; and first, after a passing glance at Vesuvius, which was unusually clear, we went to the Museum, and saw all the curious things collected from Pompeii and Herculaneum. There was the service of plate which some active butler had spread out for an intended dinner eighteen hundred years ago; the loaf which that day was to have been cut, the store of eggs and of chestnuts which were dressed somewhat sooner than was designed. Then there was Mrs. Diomed's garment, at least a piece of it; the ornaments that were found upon her head, the ring on her finger, and the key which her hand still kept hold of; there was the helmet of the faithful sentinel who was found at his post, and the iron to which the legs of three prisoners were still fixed; there were the appurtenances which belonged to a very fine lady, rouge among the rest. But it is difficult to say what there was not. It is strange to see that the world wanted and possessed in those days almost every thing to which we now attach value.

"After this sight some of us went to Puteoli, and saw the spot where St. Paul must have landed. From thence we proceeded by the shore of the Mediterranean, which was eminently beautiful, giving us a full view of a great part of the Bay; and we then paid a visit to the Sibyl. The country was originally a plain, but many hills have been thrown up, some of them not long ago, by the operation of volcanoes. Through these we wound our way; at last we stopped opposite a little path leading to the left, and marched along by the side of the Lake Avernus to the foot of a mountain. As for this lake, which has been sung so often by Homer, if I recollect right, and certainly by Virgil — 'Divinosque lacus, et Averna sonantia sylvis' — it has about as much beauty and romance as the great pond at Weybourne! It was, however, exceedingly curious to be visiting the Infernal Regions,

'And where that mayne broad stream for aye doth flow,
Which parts the gladsome fields from Place of Woe;
Whence none shall ever pass to Elysium playne,
Or from Elysium ever turn agayne.'

"I always thought that these strange places were deep under ground; but, I tell you, this day I saw Acheron, and Styx, and Elysium, and what not; and with my own hands threw a stone into the Mare Mortuum, and with my own eyes saw the stone swim.

"We next proceeded

'To ascend the sacred hill
Where Phœbus is adored, and seek the shade
Which hides from sight his venerable Maid.
Deep in a cave the Sibyl makes abode.'

"Leaving the ladies at the entrance, I marched with four guides *into* the mountain. The cave is said to extend about a quarter of a mile, but it seemed to me that they had measured it with some poetical licence. At first it was very fair walking, but it grew steeper as we proceeded. The walls were of lava, grown hard by age. At length we came to some water. I mounted on the back of a strong guide, and another carried a flambeau; at length we arrived at the Sibyl's drawing-room, a narrow cell, in which there was a kind of stone sofa, and a sulphurous bath, in which the Sibyl used to show herself to those who consulted her, and among the rest to Julius Cæsar. After seeing all these lions we returned to Naples."

"Wednesday, April 15.
Eight o'clock in the evening.

"We started soon after eight this morning for Pompeii. It is most curious to be thus, in 1840, walking about a town which in many respects is as fresh and as perfect as it was on the 23rd August, A. D. 79. There were the streets with their ancient names and the ruts worn by the carriages. At No. 1, Via Consularis, lived the Ædile Pansa with his name over the door, and just within it was found the skeleton of his porter. At No. 2 resided a poet, who, unlike his fraternity, appears to have been very wealthy. The house, though not large, was very elegant. Among his pictures was a beautiful and very well preserved one, of Venus and Cupid fishing. On his

table were fish, bread, and olives. In his kitchen were found the bones of two of his cooks, with many less important articles of kitchen furniture. In another apartment, stretched on a bed, the left arm holding up the head, was found another body. In another house there was a table spread with five knives, and there were the skeletons of six men who seemed to have been surprised while they were making themselves comfortable; for on the table before them were eggs and ham, fish, figs, &c. At No. 6, resided the baker, and there were his grinding stones and his oven, in which there was still some bread. Not far off lived a musical gentleman, and many instruments of music were found in his house. In one room there were nine bodies, three of them with flageolets in their hands. Sallust's house in the same street was very elegantly furnished, and there we got a very good conception of the way in which he used to dine. At one end of the building there was a good painting of windows, sky, and country. It appears that Mrs. Diomed had taken refuge in the cellar, her husband was making his escape at the back of the house, and was there found standing upright. The statue of the Faun, which is much celebrated, was found in the centre of the garden of Marcus Tullius, round which there were the remnants of forty-four great pillars; he seemed to have lived well through the year, for there was a great number of large wine-jars (*amphoræ*), which were turned bottom upwards, showing they had been recently emptied; there were several beautiful mosaic pictures, one of the Nile, with its animals and birds, sea-horses, alligators, snakes, and shoveller ducks, which last the boys thought admirably executed. There was also a very fine mosaic of Alexander and Darius. In a small room were found the remains of the whole family, at least twenty-four bodies of men women and children, also a silver candelabrum, and a good deal of money. In the adjacent Temple of Fortune we were struck with the brilliant whiteness of the marble, and we noticed half a square of very thick glass in an aperture between two apartments. The Forum was splendid. It was very extensive, and gave us a good notion of the various purposes to which it was turned—a Senate House in one place; a Temple of Jupiter, if I recollect right, in another; the spots where they made speeches and measured corn; an Exchange, &c., &c.

"But such a beautiful scene as there was before us — to the

left and immediately opposite to us, a line of hills; to the right, the sea with Castel-a-mare, and on its shores several white towns, with the island of Capri, and the promontory of Minerva in the distance; certainly this region is eminently beautiful. One of their national proverbs says, that Naples is a piece of heaven which has tumbled down upon earth.

"We had intended to dine in the Forum, but by mistake our dinner was laid out in a kind of barn-looking room at some little distance from it. To say nothing of our food, which, however, was very acceptable, we were highly amused by the whole scene. We had plenty of native waiters, but I do not think they mustered a single stocking among them. A musician made his appearance, who first played on a cracked instrument, and then sung a variety of fine Italian airs in very good style. Then he set two men and a boy figuring away in a dance, somewhat like an Irish jig; and finally, renouncing his instrument, set to work dancing himself to the music of his own voice. The bard, however, like Walter Scott's, gave us to understand that the higher efforts of his art required the inspiration of a tumbler of wine. We afterwards saw the Temple of Isis. The worshippers stood below, the oracles were delivered from above, and we saw clearly the aperture by which the priest obtained admittance behind the altar, and spoke for the goddess when she happened to be in a silent mood. The guide assured us that he had tried the experiment, and the people below supposed that the voice really came from above. It seems that the priests made a good thing of it; for some money and wine were found, and the skeleton of a man with an iron bar in his hand, with which he had endeavoured to break through the wall.

"We afterwards saw at some distance a beautiful theatre, as perfect, I should think, as it was at the moment of the eruption. Also an immense amphitheatre in an equal state of preservation; so that we have the clearest conception of the stage on which the captives and Christians fought with wild beasts, and of the order in which the gentlefolks of Pompeii sat while they were amusing themselves with this delicious spectacle. But it began to grow cold; so my wife and I returned home in our carriage, and I gladly leave it to others to supply you with further information."

At this time great excitement prevailed in Naples,

the king having announced his determination to go to war with England rather than give up his rights on the sulphur question. Large bodies of troops were embarked for Sicily. The fortifications were repaired and extended, and everywhere the din of military preparations was heard. Mr. Buxton, however, did not take alarm, but remained at Naples, and one morning, the apprehensions of war having somewhat subsided, his party visited the crater of Vesuvius. While approaching Naples, on their return home at night, they observed lights in a part of the harbour where they had never appeared before. On entering the town, it was found to be in an uproar of confusion; the Bellerophon seventy-four, and the Hydra armed steamer, had entered the harbour, and, to the astonishment and indignation of the Neapolitans, had anchored under the teeth of their batteries. The streets were thronged with the whole population of Naples, in the utmost excitement. Regiments of horse and foot were marching rapidly to their posts; cannon and tumbrils of ammunition were rolling by; and soon the king dashed past in a barouche and four on his way to Posilippo, where the English were expected to land.

Mr. Buxton, however, felt quite confident, as indeed it proved, that the king was only endeavouring to obtain good conditions by a pretence of resistance. In a note written on the evening of the arrival of the Bellerophon and Hydra, after mentioning the excitement of the town, "people running about in all directions, companies of soldiers on the esplanade, cannon posted along it," &c., he proceeds—

"Do not be frightened. We are not. We have no idea that our sleep this night will be broken by the thunder of these guns. We have, however, ordered our passports to be prepared,

ready for a start; and I am sure to be right, when, after the manner of the Delphic oracle, I pronounce that the whole hubbub will end in smoke!"

This appears to be the last letter written by Mr. Buxton from Italy. At the end of April he was compelled to hasten to England on account of the African business, leaving the rest of the party behind, till the advance of summer should render it safe for Mrs. Buxton to return to a northern climate. In the interim, some of the travellers proceeded across Italy to Ancona, and there embarked for Greece.

To Miss Gurney, at Athens.

"Fontainebleau, Sunday, May 10.

"If an angel were to offer to tell me at this moment any earthly news, the question I should ask him would be, How fares it with our Athenians? Has the time gone merrily with them? are they safe and sound, satisfied and happy? and are they now sitting on Mars Hill, reading, as we have done to-day, the 17th chapter of Acts? What a curious scene that was, and how the Stoics would have wondered, had they been told by an oracle that the barbarian babbler before them would be more renowned at the end of two thousand years than Theseus or Themistocles! and that in a little bit of an island, which they had never heard of, the time would come when his description of them—their scorn—their avidity for news—would be copied off at the rate of one a minute!

"Well, I can truly say I have eagerly watched you, thought of you, and sailed with you; and my first inquiry every morning has been—'Is the day fine for our Attic party?' Alas! the answer has not always been gladdening. Our days have been alternately wet and dry, never very fine, sometimes excessively wet; so I fear for you. Surely I shall find a line from you at Paris to-morrow. At Paris to-morrow! you will say; why, how you must have raced! Nay, we have travelled very slowly; up betimes in the morning, always housed before eight in the evening, and yet here we are, notwithstanding we lost half a day

for want of horses, half a day by breaking our springs, and half a day by our wish to see the city of Lyons.

"Our journey, which cost so many sighs before we started, has been nothing else but pleasure. G. B. has been a capital companion. He is always gay and cheerful; humours me in the choice of rooms and dishes; does all the work; reads in the Bible to me the first stage; talks when I want a chat, and holds his tongue or goes out a stage or two when I want to meditate; or reads Byron to me when I am tired of my own employments. I suppose you have read the Giaour and the Corsair? They have furnished me with charming ideas of Grecian scenery. In our voyage to Marseilles I saw the sun rise out of the sea, and he did, indeed, come forth 'as a bridegroom out of his chamber.' I had been reading Byron the evening before, with, I confess, unexpected admiration, — but sitting upon the deck that morning, and reading the 19th Psalm as the sun began to peep over the waves, I thought that David was the greater poet of the two. The verses of Byron's I had been reading, as we floated by the hills between Genoa and Marseilles, were those beginning —

> 'Slow sinks, more lovely ere his race be run,
> Behind Morea's hills the setting sun;
> Not as in northern climes, obscurely bright,
> But one unclouded blaze of living light;
> O'er the hush'd deep the yellow beam he throws,
> Gilds the green wave that trembles as it glows,' &c.

"They are charming, as much for their fidelity as for their poetry; but Byron never ploughed through a perfectly calm sea at the rate of nine knots an hour; if he had he could not but have described the velvet waves, as they were turned up by the steamer, without breaking. I never saw anything so lovely.

"But now to answer your questions. Yes, I am well, famously well, no headache, no cough, no cramp, *no nothing*. I am in capital spirits, hoping that I am going to see 'my children's children, and peace upon Africa.'

"The roads, to my surprise, have been very good, and the country all the way from Marseilles very pretty. I wish my wife would return by it; it would be so safe for her monster of a carriage. She saw it when the trees were in the sere and yellow leaf; but now, the olives first, then the walnuts, last of

all the forest-trees, are in full foliage, and give one quite a new idea of France.

"While at Paris I hope to see Madame Pelet, and ask her to go with me to the Duc de Broglie, that we may have a talk about the slave-trade, and that I may give him a copy of my book.

"How I do long to hear of all your adventures and histories!* Do you find you can talk Greek? What do you think of the Acropolis? Are Charles and Richards availing themselves to the utmost of so unprecedented an opportunity?"

To Mrs. Buxton, at Genoa.

"Paris, May 12.

"I am full of imaginations of your inns: windows not fastened, curtains not closing, and the keen winds rushing down the mountains. May God have preserved you! But I have felt, if possible, even more for those dear Athenians. I keep a little map in my pocket, and often turn to it, but I cannot say with pleasure. I would give something to know when they set foot again on the solid earth, tossed, as they have been, I fear, and sick and sad, and at their wit's end. I am glad they wandered

* One of these adventures was of rather a disagreeable character. On our way home, after crossing the Splugen, and passing through the Via Mala, we found the road blocked up by a waggon full of wood, but without any horse or man. The postboy blew his horn, but no one appeared; so at length we got down, and tried to move the waggon, but were unable to do so, and at last we were forced to tilt it in order to let the carriage pass. The woodmen, no doubt, had seen what we were doing from the hill-side, and probably had been coming down to move the waggon; but, on seeing it upset, they rushed down upon us in a state of the most ungovernable fury. Three of them fell at once upon our servant, threw him down, and mauled him terribly; another ran to the horses' heads to prevent the post-boy from going on; while a fifth attacked Mr. Richards with a shower of blows. Mr. Richards at length flung him off, and sprang upon one of the men who was kneeling upon the coachman and beating him; thus relieved, Spink jumped upon his feet, knocked over two of the ruffians with such force that his blouse was stained with their blood, and, after a moment's desperate scuffle with the others, he broke away, and, springing upon the coachbox, produced his pistols. On seeing them the fellows fled. The writer of this, meanwhile, was lying insensible on the road, having been put *hors de combat* by a heavy blow on the mouth. They lifted him into the carriage, and we reached Ragatz without any further molestation. – Ed.

to Mars Hill; it will be a pleasure to each of them all their lives. Would, however, that you were all at home again!"

The last in the series of Mr. Buxton's letters is dated from Havre de Grace:—

"My dear A. & C. "May 15. 1840.

"We are going to start to-night for England. The wind is fair, the sea smooth, and we hope to breakfast to-morrow at Southampton. I was exceedingly amused with your letters from Ancona; I know you put in all that Greek to puzzle me, but there you were mistaken, for I made it all out. While I was at Paris Madame Pelet was most kind to me, and introduced me to many persons whom I wished to see, and especially to some good abolitionists. I called on M. de St. Antoine, and was much pleased with his heartiness. I think he is more likely to be useful than any of them; he has so much heart in the work. It was, I think, this day seventeen years ago that I first brought forward the slavery question, and on Wednesday thirty-three years I was married; the two chief events of my life."

CHAPTER XXX.

1840, 1841.

GREAT PUBLIC MEETING IN EXETER HALL — PRINCE ALBERT IN THE CHAIR. — MR. BUXTON CREATED A BARONET. — PREPARATIONS FOR THE NIGER EXPEDITION. — AGRICULTURAL ASSOCIATION. — VENTILATION OF THE SHIPS. — SIR FOWELL BUXTON'S HEALTH BEGINS TO FAIL. — "THE FRIEND OF AFRICA." — PUBLIC MEETINGS. — LETTER TO THE REV. J. W. CUNNINGHAM. — DAY OF PRAYER FOR THE EXPEDITION. — PRINCE ALBERT'S VISIT TO THE VESSELS. — THE EXPEDITION SAILS. — LETTER TO CAPTAIN TROTTER.

MR. BUXTON arrived at his son's house in tolerable health, and full of impatience to carry out his plans for the suppression of the slave trade, by the establishment of lawful commerce in Africa. To these he at once devoted himself, with all the ardour that might be expected after the period of relaxation he had enjoyed. In order to bring the whole case effectually before the public, a meeting was held on the 1st of June, at which, to the high gratification of the African Society, H.R.H. Prince Albert consented to preside. The meeting took place in Exeter Hall, and formed, say the contemporary papers, "a most grand and magnificent display of national feeling." At eleven o'clock His Royal Highness entered the Hall, which was already crowded with an audience of the highest respectability. Among those present were the Duke of Norfolk, the Marquis of Breadalbane, the Marquis of Northampton, the Earls of Ripon, Howe, Chichester, Euston, Devon, and Morley; Lords Ashley, Sandon, Mahon, C. Fitzroy, Worsley, Monteagle, Teignmouth, Seaford, Howick, Eliot, Calthorpe, Nugent, R. Grosvenor, &c. &c.; M. Guizot, and the Bishops of

Winchester, Exeter, Chichester, Ripon, Salisbury, Hereford, and Norwich.

Prince Albert opened the meeting; and Mr. Buxton then moved the first resolution, concluding his address in these words:—

"I do not forget the military triumphs which this country has achieved; but there is a road to glory more noble, more illustrious, purer, and grander than the battles of Waterloo or Trafalgar; — to arrest the destruction of mankind; to pour a blessing upon a continent in ruins; to send civilisation and the mild truths of the Gospel over a region, in comparison with which Britain herself is but a speck upon the ocean; this is the road to true and enduring renown: and the desire and prayer of my heart is that Her Majesty may tread it; and that, crowned with every other blessing, she may

> 'Shine the leader of applauding nations,
> To scatter happiness and peace around her,
> To bid the prostrate captive rise and live,
> To see new cities tower at her command,
> And blasted nations flourish in her smile.'"

He was followed by Archdeacon Wilberforce (the present Bishop of Oxford), by Sir Robert Peel, the Bishops of Winchester and Chichester, the Marquis of Northampton, Sir Thomas Dyke Acland, Sir George Murray, Dr. Lushington, Mr. Samuel Gurney, the Rev. Dr. Bunting, Rev. J. W. Cunningham, and several other gentlemen. At one period an interruption was caused by the entry of Mr. O'Connell, and the clamours of part of the audience for a speech from that gentlemen; but, altogether, the meeting passed off with the most triumphant success.

Shortly after this meeting of the African Civilisation Society, it was intimated to Mr. Buxton, by Lord John Russell, that it was proposed to confer the rank of baronet upon him. After some deliberation, having

ascertained that the idea had not been suggested to the government by any of his friends, but was a spontaneous mark of their approbation of his conduct, he accepted the title with much gratification.

The summer was spent in active preparation for the Niger Expedition, for the service of which three iron steamers, the "Albert," the "Wilberforce," and "Soudan," were fitted out; and to the great satisfaction of all who were interested in the subject, the command of the expedition was given to Captain Henry Dundas Trotter who was appointed to the "Albert," Commander William Allen to the "Wilberforce," and Commander Bird Allen to the "Soudan." These gentlemen and Mr. William Cook* were the four Commissioners empowered to make treaties with the native chiefs for the abolition of the slave trade.

The African Civilisation Society engaged several scientific gentlemen to accompany the expedition; Dr. Vögel as botanist, Mr. Roscher as mineralogist and miner, Dr. Stanger as geologist, and Mr. Fraser, Curator of the Zoological Society of London, as naturalist. Mr. Uwins, a draughtsman, and Mr. Ansell, a practical gardener or seedsman, were also appointed; and the Church Missionary Society was allowed to send the Rev. Frederick Schön and Mr. Samuel Crowther† to examine into the practicability of establishing missions on the banks of the Niger.

The object of the expedition was, to explore that great

* Well known as the Captain of the Cambria, which saved the crew of the Kent East Indiaman.

† The Rev. S. Crowther (who is an African Negro), having been ordained by the Bishop of London, is now zealously labouring as a Missionary at Abeokouta. An interesting account of his deliverance from a slave-ship will be found in App. III. of Messrs. Schön and Crowther's Journals of the Niger Expedition.

artery of Western Africa, the river Niger; to examine the capabilities of the country along its banks; to enter into treaties with the native chiefs for the abolition of the slave trade; to clear the road for commercial enterprise, and to afford that enterprise the security which alone seemed necessary for its development.

Sir Fowell Buxton and his friends were also extremely anxious that this opportunity should not be lost of putting the natives in the way of cultivating the soil, and drawing forth its varied and immense resources. It will be remembered that, in 1839, an Agricultural Association was proposed. To its formation he had devoted much of his time during the summer of 1840. The expression recurs again and again in his letters — "There is nothing to which I attach more importance than to the Agricultural Association." "I am firm in the conviction that, next to religion, the Agricultural Association is the means on which we ought chiefly to rely."

To Sir Thomas Dyke Acland, Bart.

"August, 1840.

"This consideration has presented itself to me with great force — we never shall have again so favourable an opportunity for making an experiment in agriculture. The few people whom we shall send will go out under the escort and protection of the vessels. They will be carried through the mangroves and miasma of the delta by steam; they will have the medical help of at least eight surgeons or physicians; above all, they will have the sound and cool judgment of Captain Trotter to restrain them from settling, unless the circumstances of climate, soil, and disposition of the natives should be very favourable. If, then, we are ever to make the attempt, why lose such an opportunity? Our intention is to make a mere commencement, on a most moderate scale. If it answer, we shall enlarge our operations hereafter, and we shall have something practical and positive to lay before the public."

It was at length resolved to adopt this agricultural experiment. Four thousand pounds were subscribed for the purpose by Mr. Evans, M.P., Mr. James Cook, Mr. Samuel Gurney, Sir T. D. Acland, Mr. T. Sturge, Mr. J. G. Hoare, Sir Fowell Buxton, and Mr. E. N. Buxton. Sir Fowell further proposed that a tract of land should be purchased in a healthy situation near the confluence of the Niger and Tchadda. This proposition was unanimously adopted, and measures were immediately taken for carrying it into effect.

Referring to this plan for a model farm, Sir Fowell says, in a letter addressed to Miss Gurney, on the 6th of December —

"I cannot conclude these particulars about Africa without telling you of a text which has been cheering me up all day: 'There shall be showers of blessing, and the tree of the field shall yield her fruit, and the earth shall yield her increase, and they shall be safe in their land, and shall know that I am the Lord, when I have broken the bands of their yoke, and delivered them out of the hand of those that served themselves of them.'" (Ezekiel, xxxiv. 26—28.)

The severe attacks made upon his plans by some of the leading journals gave him much pain; "But," he tells Mrs. Johnston, "I cannot help remembering, when I feel the breezes that blow upon us now, what the gales were in 1825 and 1826, when our Anti-slavery bark put to sea. That cause was indeed cradled in a hurricane, and yet how safely is it havened!"

Throughout his correspondence innumerable passages occur which show his extreme anxiety for the safety of those who were voluntarily about to encounter so dangerous a climate. He says, in a letter to Captain Washington,—

"Trotter tells me that the expense of the ventilation already

exceeds the estimate by 1400*l.*, and that a further expense of 500*l.* is still required, which he will not proceed to incur till he has the authority of the Government. Now I am as clear as daylight about two points: first, that the Government ought to pay this; and secondly, that if they will not, we must; and that, therefore, it ought to be so proceeded with as not to delay the departure of the expedition. As far as I am concerned, I give my hearty concurrence, and will take my full share of the responsibility."

To Mr. Samuel Gurney, after requesting him to attend a meeting of the Agricultural Committee, and pay in a subscription for him: —

"I leave it to you to put down my name for the sum you think right. To tell you the truth, I had thought of being very mean in my subscription. In one way or another Africa has cost me a good round sum, and on this ground I thought myself justified in subscribing only 1000*l.*; but if you think that the smallness of this will discourage other people and do mischief, put me down for two, or three, or four thousand. I am very glad to think that Africa has a friend like you, more able, and more willing, to give."

On the 7th of August Dr. Lushington and Sir Fowell Buxton addressed a letter to Lord John Russell*, setting forth the importance of establishing the model farm. After this, he was constrained to go into the country for the re-establishment of his health. "To tell you the truth," he writes to Sir George Stephen, "I am dead beat; I do not recollect ever to have felt so languid and good for nothing."

To the Right Hon. Stephen Lushington, D.C.L.

"My dear Lushington,

"Dr. Farre has been pleased to write me a letter, telling me that I have just this alternative, viz. that it is open to me now,

* See Parliamentary Papers relating to the Niger Expedition.

either to live or to die for Africa; but that, if my judgment be in favour of the former mode of proceeding, I must 'cut and run,' 'go to the country and animalise.' This is curiously in concurrence with what Dr. Holland told me six months ago.* I think I shall send you these medical letters, for if there be anything on earth, which I mortally hate, it is the sense that I am skulking away from the field of battle, while you, in spite of your ailments, go on fighting manfully. But I really cannot help it; there is not a stroke of work left in my great carcase. I am like my old horse John Bull; he does well enough for a lady to take a canter in the park, but give him a brush along the road, or a burst across the fields, and he is done up for a month.

"Now what does all this tend to? This,—that I must avail myself of your permission to leave town this week, subject to being recalled by you on any great emergency, particularly with regard either to treaties or instructions."

Private anxieties were now added to his public labours, but these occupied his thoughts far less than Africa. He thus writes to Lady Buxton from Bury, while on his way to London in obedience to a summons from Lord John Russell:—

"August 27. 1840.

"It will cheer you to hear that I am so far on my journey, safe and sound, remarkably comfortable, and perfectly well into the bargain. * * * What are mines, and miseries, and mail-coaches, as compared with the vision, all sunshine, of a people, thousands and hundreds of thousands, springing from bondage to liberty, from stripes and howling to wages and singing, from being things to being men, from blindness to the Gospel? * * *

"I feel very thankful, and am a happy man this night."

Among other matters of interest which demanded his attention during his short visit to London was the setting on foot a periodical under the name of "The Friend of

* Dr. Holland, some time before, wrote to Mrs. Buxton:—"From what I have seen, Mr. Buxton is working beyond the power which even the strongest natural constitution can give."

Africa," the superintendence of which was undertaken by Captain Washington, R. N., an energetic member of the committee.

During September great pains were taken to inform and interest the public on the subject of the African expedition, and with this view it was resolved that meetings should be held in the principal commercial towns. It was of importance that these should be ably conducted. The Marquis of Breadalbane presided at the one convened at Glasgow. "For Manchester," Sir Fowell writes to Captain Washington, "Dr. Lushington would be the man. His presence would ensure success, but I really know not how to ask him. We trouble him enough upon matters even more important. He wants rest as much as any man, and yet he is of so free and ardent a nature that he will kill himself rather than not do anything he can."

Dr. Lushington, however, and Sir George Murray, attended the Manchester meeting. Another, at which many of the nobility and gentry of Norfolk were present, was held in St. Andrew's Hall, Norwich, Mr. Villebois, then high sheriff of Norfolk, being in the chair; but a large body of Chartists broke into the hall, and after great uproar and confusion compelled the meeting to disperse. It is to this meeting that the following letter alludes: —

"My dear Lushington,

"What with the Chartists at Norwich, and the Times newspaper, and the Edinburgh Review, and the bitter resolutions of the Liverpool Anti-slavery Society, and the recognition of Texas, and the threatened admission of slave-grown sugar, clouds seem to be gathering round about us; but I do not mean to allow these things utterly to vex me. I am as sure as ever that we are upon the right tack, and, if so, we shall beat them all yet. My chief anxiety is, that the instructions to the com-

missioners, and the model treaty, should be finished in good style. I will be with you at dinner on Wednesday, and we will talk over these matters."

The following is an extract of a letter to the Rev. J. W. Cunningham of Harrow, in which Sir Fowell urged him to give lectures in different places on the subject of the slave trade: —

"Northrepps, Sept. 23. 1840.

"* * * A month spent in going from town to town would do us infinite good — *infinite*, literally speaking, for it affects negro souls as well as bodies.

"So, O man of God, pray send to Trew* the instant you receive this, and offer to traverse a district for at least four weeks. The effect will be, that a hundred other clergymen, evangelical and eloquent, will follow your example, and the tocsin will be sounded through the kingdom; the subject will be no longer dormant; our Society will be rich instead of poor; and, being rich, will adventure to do things connected with the expedition, and things of essential importance, at which it now starts and trembles.

"I speak most seriously when I say, I think you may thus do us vast good; and, moreover, the West Indians also. You tell me you heard one of them confess that my plan was 'their only shelter from ruin.' Very curious that it should have come to this. But it is true enough: nothing but the horrors of the slave trade, fixed and stamped on the mind of the public, will avert the introduction of slave-grown sugar.

"But the most wonderful part of the case is, that the West Indians look on very quietly, and leave me to fight their battle. MacQueen has essentially served the cause. Gladstone, Lord Seaford, and John Irving have served it; and there ends, pretty nearly, the catalogue of West Indian proprietors who have so much as lifted up a finger for us.

"Excuse my thus troubling you, but I really am so pressed, so overdone, that I must press on others. Every proposition is brought to me; every step taken I am obliged to act in."

* The Rev. J. M. Trew had been appointed Secretary to the African Civilisation Society.

At this time the idea began to gain ground of removing the prohibitory duties on slave-grown sugar. The Duchess of Sutherland having written to Sir Fowell Buxton to inquire his opinions with regard to this proposition, he replied as follows: —

"I lose no time in replying to the letter which your Grace has done me the honour to address to me. I can have no hesitation in saying, that in my opinion the best and wisest course which we can pursue is to enforce the prohibitory duties against slave-grown sugar, that is, against the sugars of Cuba and Brazil. It seems to me to be one of those questions in which ordinary rules are to be disregarded, and in which considerations of political advantage must be made to yield to the superior law of moral duty. We cannot admit the produce of Cuba and Brazil into home consumption without giving a vast impulse to the growth of sugar in those countries, or, in other words, without giving the strongest encouragement to the slave trade. The question then presents itself in this form. Shall England, which has hitherto been the only hope of Africa — which has cheerfully paid twenty millions for the emancipation of her own slaves— which has, as some of us think, derived more true glory from this than from Trafalgar and Waterloo — shall this England, which has hitherto thought no labour and no sacrifices too great for the accomplishment of this special object, now turn round, and by a single act do more for the promotion of the slave trade than it has ever done for its suppression, and be the very means of pouring down upon Africa a more aggravated load of misery, ruin, crime, and desolation than she has ever yet endured? I cannot think that it will be for a moment pretended that we should be justified on principle in taking this course; and if this be true, such a course cannot, in the long run, prosper. A temporary relief, no doubt, the country may obtain; but at what a cost! Such base inconsistency would tarnish the character of the country in the eyes of the civilised world. Our high professions, our appeals to other nations, calling upon them to relinquish, from fear to God and in pity to a quarter of the human race, the iniquitous gains of the slave trade — the boast we have made of superior humanity — all these would be held up against us in mockery when the world should perceive that

for the sake of revenue, and for the sake of effecting some reduction in the price of an article of consumption, we have resolved, with our eyes open, to do that which must necessarily produce an increase of the very trade which we have hitherto pretended to detest. But we shall lose more than reputation. We shall forfeit His favour who rules the destinies of nations. Enlightened as this country is on the subject of the slave trade, and knowing well that guilt upon the largest scale, and to the most intense degree, inseparably cleaves to it, I can conceive no national crime which would be darker, or more likely to call down the vengeance of God, than for us to become now, knowingly, parties to the extension of that traffic. President Jefferson, himself a slaveholder, speaking of slavery, said, 'I tremble for my country when I remember that God is just.' When Great Britain shall have been bribed to give direct encouragement to the trade in human flesh, shall we not have reason to fear that such a crime—attended, as in our case it would be, by such consummate hypocrisy—would bring down upon the nation some heavy chastisement? These are the leading considerations which present themselves to my mind, but there are others which must not be lost sight of. There seems good reason to believe that the high price of sugar is but a temporary evil. I think we may reasonably expect that many of the difficulties which have hitherto existed in the West Indies will cease, and we may hope that the Islands will not continue to suffer from unfavourable seasons. Again, the quantity of sugar coming from the East Indies is increasing every day, and will without doubt go far towards the reduction of prices. As a question of pure policy, would it not be better to give an impulse to the growth of sugar in our own territories in the East and West Indies, than to confer such a bonus on Cuba and Brazil? Another point should be borne in mind. The Government cannot pretend that they are driven by necessity, and the overwhelming voice of the country, to dispense with the prohibitory duties. There have been, I take it, no demonstrations of any great anxiety on the subject, on the part of the people. The noise that is made is not very loud, and it proceeds rather from the merchants who want to sell the Brazilian sugar than from the people who want to buy it. If the latter should be laid clearly before the public, and they should be made really sensible that they can only

obtain foreign sugar through the medium of the slave trade, they would not call upon the Government to instigate such crimes, and to multiply such horrors as they know belong to the slave trade, for their relief. When we proposed the abolition of slavery, it was tauntingly said, 'The public are your friends now; but tell them they shall have their will, slavery shall cease, but they shall pay for it, and you will hear no more of anti-slavery meetings and petitions.' Slavery was abolished, and a tremendous mulct was thereby imposed upon the people of England; and it must ever be remembered to their honour, that not one petition was presented against it while the measure was in progress, and not a murmur, as authenticated by any public remonstrance or petition, has since been heard. I must now conclude this long letter. You have called me to write upon a subject in which I feel the most intense interest, for it is palpable that, if we once consent to the admission of slave-grown sugar, there is an end of every hope for unhappy Africa. All our past sacrifices of money and of the lives of our sailors are rendered worse than useless, and the bright expectation in which we have indulged of seeing a new day dawn upon a hundred millions of our fellow-creatures, and of the spread of peace, of knowledge, and of Christianity amongst them, proves but an idle and disappointing dream."

To Edward N. Buxton, Esq.

"Northrepps Hall, Oct. 1840.

"You talk about 'idle people shooting in the country.' I beg to say this does not apply to me, as my secretary could tell you. He has just groaned out to me, that in five days last week he despatched eighty-eight letters of mine, and some of them very lengthy, and a very great majority connected with the slave trade."

The motto of the Buxton family had been, "Whatever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might." Of this lengthy but appropriate sentence he retained only the last clause; and "Do it with thy might" was the motto attached to the arms which he bore as a baronet. "But I do not think," he writes to a friend,

"my motto and I square well together now-a-days. I have no 'might,' nor energy, nor pluck, nor anything of that sort; and this kind of listlessness reaches even to my two pet pursuits—negroes and partridges. In short, I feel myself changed in almost everything."

As the time for the departure of the vessels was now drawing near, he became anxious that a day of prayer should be appointed for the safety and success of an expedition which would be exposed to so many dangers. "Pray do not let us lose sight of this," he wrote to Mr. Coates, then one of the secretaries of the Church Missionary Society; "never was there a case which more required the Divine blessing."

On the same subject he addressed Sir John Jeremie, the Governor of the West Coast of Africa: —

"Northrepps Hall, Nov. 1. 1840.

"It is determined that a day shall be set apart for prayer on behalf of our efforts for Africa, and especially for the safety and success of the expedition. Sunday, November the 8th, is the day appointed. I can confidently say, that the new Governor of Western Africa and his family will not be forgotten. I greatly rejoice that this determination has been come to. Surely, considering the difficulties, the perils, the prejudices at home, the brutal ignorance in Africa; considering, again, how many brave and good men are hazarding their lives in the cause of humanity and righteousness, and, above all, reflecting on the mighty consequences which may, and which by the blessing of God, as we hope, will follow the combined effort we are now making, I say, considering all these things, surely we have need to crave Divine help, and the guidance of more and better than human wisdom. Farewell, my dear friend, and be God's blessing upon you and yours, for Christ's sake."

To J. J. Gurney, Esq.

"Upton, March 9. 1841.

"I am staying here for the morning, walking about with my wife, and am going to Hampstead to dinner, when I am to see,

and spend half an hour with, our poor dear brother Hoare. Have you heard of his truly elevated state of mind? it quite takes away the sting of his illness. * * *

"We had a capital party of the Niger officers and others at the Brewery yesterday — about thirty people — Trotter, Bird Allen, Washington, Sir Robert Inglis, Acland, Mrs. Fry, among the number.

"I know that she (Mrs Fry) is anxious to visit the crew on board the 'Albert.' I have therefore fixed with Trotter that he shall receive a good party of us on board his vessel on Friday the 19th. Now I very, very much hope that you will come too. Do not let anything stop you. Our one hope for the expedition is, that the blessing of our Lord may go along with them; and the desire of all of us must be, that these vessels may never be permitted to leave this shore unless the presence of the Lord be with them."

He several times minutely inspected the vessels fitted out for the expedition, which were then lying in the river; and he was one of the party which waited upon H. R. H. Prince Albert, when he visited them on the 23rd of March.

To Miss Gurney.

"Leamington, April 1. 1841.

"Now I must tell you about Prince Albert's visit to the vessels. I went an hour before he was expected, and found everything in the most perfect order, and the officers in full dress. Trotter looked remarkably well in his uniform, and I was glad to have the opportunity of seeing him actually engaged in the command of his people. At the appointed time two carriages and four drove on to the quay, containing Prince Albert, Mr. Anson, Major Keppel (our late member for Norfolk), and half-a-dozen others. I was upon the quarter-deck, and Professor Airy with me, near the steps, which the Prince immediately came up. He greeted me with the most good-natured familiarity, and expressed his pleasure at seeing me 'on board my fleet.' He then closely examined everything, and seemed to take great delight in the whole concern, and to un-

derstand mechanics. He was especially delighted with a buoy fixed ready at the stern of the ship to be let down at a moment's notice. It contained a light which (at least they said so) water only inflamed. This was for the purpose of saving any one who might happen to fall overboard at night. I said to Keppel, not intending the Prince should hear me (which however he did), 'I wish his Royal Highness would order one of his suite, yourself, for example, to be thrown overboard, that we might save your life by this apparatus.' The Prince took up the idea, and seemed half inclined to set Keppel a swimming, in order that we might have the gratification of the salvage. After examining everything in the 'Albert,' the boat came alongside; the Prince and six of his attendants got in, and I was also invited, and was not very far from having reason to regret the honour. The wind was blowing hard, and the tide rolling along at its full force. Our sailors were not accustomed to the navigation of the Thames, so the tide ran away with us, and dashed us with considerable violence against a yacht at anchor, the 'William and Mary.' We got entangled amongst the ropes attached to her anchor, and a cry was raised from the vessels, 'You will be dragged over, lie down!' Down went his Royal Highness flat to the bottom of the boat, and without ceremony we all bundled down to. As it was, the rope scraped along my back. When we got clear, the Prince sprang up, laughing heartily at the adventure, saying, 'I have had one ducking before this year, when I fell through the ice, and I thought we were going to have a second of a much worse kind.' The alarm felt on board the vessels at our situation was very considerable; and Bird Allen had ordered his boats to be lowered.

"After visiting the two other vessels, the Prince took leave of Trotter and the company, and expressed himself highly pleased with what he had seen."

On the 14th of April, 1841, Captain Trotter and Commander William Allen sailed for the Niger with the Albert and Wilberforce, the Soudan having put to sea a few weeks earlier. It need not be said that this event was one full of the deepest interest to Sir Fowell. His prayers were indeed fervent for the success of the

expedition, and the welfare of its gallant commanders and crews; and, though deeply impressed by the risks they were about to incur, his unshaken confidence in the presence and providence of God did not fail him now. The chief source of apprehension lay in the deadly climate; but against its dangers every human precaution had been taken. The ships were to steam as rapidly as possible through the mouths of the rivers, where the miasma chiefly prevails. Dr. Reid had invented a system of ventilation by which a constant current of air, impregnated with chloride of lime, could, by the agency of the steam-engines, be maintained through all parts of the vessels; a large proportion of the crews were natives of Africa, and the medical staff was remarkably able and efficient. With these precautions—the whole expedition, also, being under the command of so able and judicious a man, whose eminent qualifications had pointed him out for this responsible office—it was confidently hoped that all the perils which, it was well known, were inseparable from such an undertaking might be passed through with safety.

With reference to the expedition, Sir Fowell frequently repeated Cowper's lines:—

"Heaven speed the canvass, gallantly unfurled,
To furnish and accommodate a world;
To give the pole the produce of the sun,
And knit th' unsocial climates into one.
Soft airs and gentle heavings of the wave,
Impel the fleet, whose errand is to save,
To succour wasted regions, and replace
The smile of opulence in sorrow's face.
Let nothing adverse, nothing unforeseen,
Impede the bark that ploughs the deep serene,
Charged with a freight transcending in its worth,
The gems of India, nature's rarest birth;
That flies, like Gabriel, on his Lord's commands,
A herald of God's love to Pagan lands."

On the evening before the ships sailed, Sir Fowell wrote to Captain Trotter from Leamington:—

"My dear Friend, "April 13. 1841.

"Once more I bid you farewell. I need not, I am sure, repeat to you the extreme interest with which I shall follow you, nor the earnest prayers which my heart will pour forth for your welfare and prosperity. You will find all that I feel at this time, regarding you and your whole party, in the 121st Psalm. May I beg you to convey to Captain W. Allen, Lieutenants Fishbourne and Strange, Dr. MacWilliam, and indeed to each of your officers, my very best wishes and regards.

"* * * With my best regards, and with the sympathy of us all for Mrs. Trotter, I once more crave that the blessing of the Lord may be with you in your mission of peace and mercy.

"Yours ever, most faithfully,

"T. Fowell Buxton.

"P. S. April 14.—How ardently I trust that you are steaming away to your satisfaction this blowing day! The expression is often on my lips, and always in my heart,—

'Soft airs and gentle heavings of the wave,
Impel the bark whose errand is to save.'"

CHAPTER XXXI.

1841.

CORRESPONDENCE. — JOURNEY TO SCOTLAND. — DEER-STALKING. — RETURN HOME. — GOOD NEWS FROM THE NIGER EXPEDITION. — ACCOUNT OF ITS PROGRESS. — SCENERY OF THE NIGER. — TREATY CONCLUDED WITH OBI. — HIS INTELLIGENCE AND COURAGE. — THE ATTAH OF EGGARAH. — SICKNESS APPEARS ON BOARD. — THE MODEL FARM. — THE SOUDAN AND WILBERFORCE SENT DOWN THE RIVER. — THE NEWS REACHES ENGLAND. — DISTRESS OF SIR FOWELL BUXTON. — THE ALBERT PROCEEDS UP THE RIVER. — DENSE POPULATION. — AGRICULTURAL PRODUCE IN THE MARKETS. — SOME SLAVES LIBERATED. — THE NUFIS. — INCREASED SICKNESS ON BOARD THE ALBERT. — IT RETURNS TO THE SEA. — PERILOUS DESCENT OF THE RIVER. — MORTALITY ON BOARD. — DEATH OF CAPTAIN BIRD ALLEN. — OPINIONS OF THE COMMISSIONERS AS TO THE EXPEDITION.

THE departure of the Niger expedition from the shores of England left Sir Fowell's mind comparatively disengaged. Nothing now remained but to await the issue of the undertaking; and his broken health imperatively demanding attention, he stayed for some weeks at Leamington under the care of Dr. Jephson. From thence he writes: —

To the Rev. Dr. Bunting and Rev. John Beecham, Secretaries of the Wesleyan Missionary Society.

"My dear Friends, "Leamington, April 26. 1841.

"I regret much that I shall be prevented by indisposition from attending your annual meeting. Do me the favour to accept the enclosed very small and inadequate token of my interest in your missionary operations, more especially those connected with Africa and the West Indies. May God's blessing rest upon all the labours of your Society! may He raise up for you multitudes of new and generous friends; for

never was there a time when a greater necessity existed that your hands should be strengthened, and that you should be furnished with the means of embracing other and hitherto neglected fields within the range of your exertions. I must not lose this opportunity of expressing the deep sense I entertain of the benefits which our Society for the Extinction of the Slave Trade and Civilisation of Africa has received from the active and cordial co-operation which each of you has afforded."

To the same.

"I read with deep interest to my family yesterday evening the missionary notices of your society. I hardly know how to express the pleasure I felt at the self-devotion and courage of your labourers, in Jamaica especially. These passages have wrung from me, against my determination, the enclosed 50*l.* Give me leave to say, that that shall not prevent me from responding in my humble way to any call you may make on behalf of Africa."

"With this great object in view," writes Mr. Trew, "whatever efforts were made by the Missionary Societies met with the most prompt and generous support from Sir Fowell. The only question he asked was, 'Are these men the servants of the Most High God? Do they desire in simplicity and godly sincerity to preach Jesus Christ and him crucified, and to labour for good to the bodies and souls of the poor benighted Africans?' Once assured of this, his heart and hand were ever ready to help them. It was not that he undervalued the agency of the Church to which he belonged; to efforts made by her individual members he responded with surpassing liberality. But in his view of the miseries which afflicted Africa, there was no time to be lost in waiting. His maxim was, 'Dum Roma deliberat Saguntum perit;' and under this conviction he lived, and enlarged the bounds of his Christian benevolence."

While on a short visit to Matlock he writes to Mrs. Johnston: —

"May 4. 1841.

"The thing that has most interested me, and has awakened many old and slumbering feelings, is the circumstance that

thirty-nine years ago I spent a Sunday here with the Gurneys, on our excursion to the Lakes before H. and I were engaged. Could we then have drawn aside the curtain, and have seen what we should be on our next visit to Matlock—our youngest child with us on the point of entering Cambridge—letters in our pockets from two of our married children, speaking, in most pleasant terms of *their* sons and daughters; could we also have been aware that in the interim I had spent nearly twenty years in Parliament, and that the gracious Lord had blessed my efforts with regard to slavery and the slave trade;—could we, I say, in the former period have realised what we should be nearly forty years after, how strange but yet cheering would have been the peep into futurity! and now looking back through this long series of years, I am constrained to confess that 'goodness and mercy have followed me all the days of my life.'"

His health having been in a great degree restored under Dr. Jephson's care, he agreed to join his son, and his nephew, Mr. Edmund Buxton, at a moor they had taken in the north of Scotland. Being surrounded by a cheerful party, the month he spent in the wild seclusion of Ausdale, a little shooting-lodge near the top of the Ord of Caithness, proved a time of peculiar pleasure and refreshment to him. Towards the end of his stay there he writes to his younger sons:—

"Ausdale, Sept. 6. 1841.

"To-morrow morning we leave Caithness, and expect to reach London about the 25th instant. Everything here marks that our visit has come to its natural conclusion. In the first place, all the grouse are killed. We may go out for half a day and not see above a brace; and then our tea, our wine, our marmalade, our currant jelly, our novel, are, some of them quite, and the rest all but, out. We have very much enjoyed being here. Nothing can have been more harmonious and one-minded than our party. We have lived in luxury, and, in one respect, have fared like savages, for our next day's dinner has been playing in the stream, or roving in the forest."

Sir Fowell Buxton now returned to Northrepps. The season was advancing, and every week increased the anxiety with which tidings of the Niger Expedition were looked for. At length they arrived, dated "August 20, River Niger," and were of the most encouraging character. "With two exceptions," said Captain Trotter, "the whole company is in good health." "This," writes Sir Fowell, "I think highly satisfactory, and may God in his mercy grant that we may continue to hear such favourable reports! I am, I confess, not devoid of anxiety."

He thus replies to Captain Trotter's letter: —

"Northrepps Hall, Nov. 12. 1841.

"I must write a few lines, if it be only to assure you that my anxiety is unabated to hear tidings of the Expedition, and more especially to hear about yourself, Captains William and Bird Allen, and Cook. I was going to add Lieutenant Fishbourne; but I may as well say at once, all the officers and all the crews. I believe I should hardly exaggerate if I should say that while engaged in our family devotions I have never, or at all events most rarely, neglected to offer up my prayers for the safety of you all, for the success of the Expedition, and for the out-pouring of God's grace upon Africa. I trust and I believe that I am but one of many thousands with whom these things form a subject of daily and heartfelt prayer."

The history of the Niger Expedition is so closely associated with that of the subject of this memoir, that it may not be deemed irrelevant to give a short account of its progress, its fair promise of success, and its lamentable reverses, taken from the Parliamentary papers and despatches, and from the published accounts of Captain W. Allen, Dr. MacWilliam, the Rev. J. F. Schön, and the Rev. S. Crowther.

The Niger Expedition began to ascend the Nun branch of the river on the 20th of August, 1841, that

being the season recommended by Captain Beecroft, and other gentlemen well acquainted with the subject.* Every one was in the highest spirits, cheered by the novelty and beauty of the scenery, and by the exhilarating feeling of the air, which appeared perfectly salubrious; and it was difficult to imagine that it could be otherwise. After Sunday Island, where the influence of the tides gives place to the constant downward current of the river, a marked change took place in the scenery. The banks began to be slightly elevated above the water, and, instead of the mangrove, a variety of beautiful palms and other trees formed a forest so dense, that, for upwards of 100 miles (except where spots were cleared for cultivation), the eye could not penetrate more than a few yards beyond the water's edge. These cleared spots, containing yams, cocoas, cassadas, Indian corn, plantains, and occasionally sugar-cane, began to appear immediately after leaving Sunday Island, and gradually became more frequent. Solitary huts were now succeeded by clusters, and clusters of huts by villages, the villages became larger and more populous; while the natives showed themselves less timid, and often came off in their canoes to hold intercourse with the ships. Their timidity at first had been great, but their disposition was invariably friendly. For the first 50 miles there was little appearance of trade; but afterwards large canoes were seen carrying palm-oil, destined for Brass Town and Bonny.† The expedition continued its course every day, resting, however, on the Sunday, "as the frequent shoaling of the water subjected the engineers and stokers to great exhaustion, and ren-

* Captain Trotter to the Secretary of the Admiralty.—Parl. Papers relative to the Niger Expedition, p. 47.

† Captain Trotter's Report: P. P., p. 90.

dered the husbanding of their strength imperatively necessary."*

On the 26th of August all the vessels had reached Aboh; and on the following morning Obi, the chief of the Ibo country, came on board the Albert, accompanied by several of his family and head-men. The objects of the expedition, as well as each article of the treaty, were then fully explained to him by an intelligent interpreter from Sierra Leone; and the commissioners were exceedingly pleased with the intelligence, judgment, and apparent sincerity of Obi's remarks. The momentary opposition elicited by some of the articles only tended to show how clearly he understood the objects of the treaty. It is worthy of remark, that the substance of his frequent interruptions was, that if he abolished the slave-trade, his people must have some occupation by which to obtain subsistence, and that he, therefore, wished plenty of ships to be sent to trade with him.† He came without any pomp or state. With the exception of his dress, which was a British scarlet uniform coat and scarlet cloth trousers, his appearance was more that of a keen trader than of a sovereign chief of an extensive country. His manner, however, though friendly and unceremonious, showed a consciousness of power, and his attendants treated him with marked respect.‡ His appearance is described as prepossessing; he was upwards of six feet high, and stout in proportion: his forehead was large, and his countenance generally indicated acute perception.

"An instance of his firmness," says Dr. MacWilliam, "was shown one day on board of the Albert: while he was engaged

* Captain Trotter's Report, P. P. p. 91.
† Despatch from the Commissioners, P.P. pp. 32, 33.
‡ Captain Trotter's Report, P. P. p. 92.

with the commissioners, I was amusing his brother and some of the head-men by performing some experiments with Smee's galvanic battery. Obi came up to us just as the instrument was fitted for giving shocks: Anorama, the judge, a little man, touched the cylinders at the end of the conductors, and, as the battery was at the moment acting rather powerfully, he dropped them with rapidity and would not again come near. Most of the others looked upon this new and extraordinary agent with suspicion and awe: even Obi himself stooped somewhat doubtingly to take the shock; but he seemed determined to show no signs of irresolution or fear before his people. He took a firm grasp of the cylinders, and held them upwards of a minute, although I could perceive the muscles of the shoulder and chest in strong electric excitation."*

Mr. Schön, the chaplain, tells us that —

"The Ibos are, in their way, a religious people; the word 'Tshuku,' God, is continually heard. Their notions of some of the attributes of the Supreme Being are, in many respects, correct, and their manner of expressing them striking: 'God has made everything; he made both white and black,' is continually on their lips. On the death of a person who has, in their estimation, been good, they say, 'he will see God,' while of a wicked person they say, 'He will go into fire.'† I opened the English Bible, and made Simon Jonas read a few verses, and translate them into Ibo. Obi was uncommonly taken with this. That a white man could read and write, was a matter of course; but that a black man — an Ibo man — a slave in times past — should know these wonderful things too, was more than he could have anticipated. He seized Simon's hand, squeezed it most heartily, and said, 'you must stop with me; you must teach me and my people;' and he would not be satisfied until Simon had made his desire known to Captain Trotter. This desire

* Dr. MacWilliam's Medical History, p. 64. He displayed less courage on another occasion. Prayers being about to be read, he was requested to kneel down. This he did; but when the service concluded, he was found almost overwhelmed with terror, the perspiration streaming down his face. He had thought, it seemed, that the white men were invoking curses on his head.

† Mr. Schön's Journal, p. 50.

proves the sincerity of his heart to perform the terms of the treaty into which he had entered. If he had any intention of evading them, he would not have expressed a desire to have a person about him who understands his own language, can watch over all his proceedings, and who, as he well knows, will join the Expedition again, and will be able to make his report to the commissioners of Obi's conduct." * "Jonas was accordingly left at Aboh for a few weeks, during which time no less than *two thousand* children were committed to him for instruction." †

The huts at Aboh were in general raised some feet from the ground, resting either upon an elevation of clay, or supported on strong wooden pillars from four to eight feet high. In the latter case, access to the hut was gained by a ladder leading to the principal aperture. They all seemed to be remarkably clean and well matted. The actual number of huts in Aboh was estimated at from 800 to 1000.‡ Obi had only two large canoes in use; but was said to possess in all fifteen, each having a small cannon lashed in the bow: they had from twenty to fifty paddles; and the largest could carry twenty fighting men. Besides these, there were at Aboh about ten head-men who had each from two to six war canoes. On an extraordinary occasion he could muster about 300 canoes, armed with swivels and muskets.§

Captain William Allen (who had previously explored the Niger, in 1833) states that the nations on the banks of the river as far as Rabba (500 miles from its mouth) are under the influence of only three powerful and independent chiefs: first, Obi, king of Ibo; secondly, the Attah, or king of Eggarah; and thirdly, the king of the Fulatahs, at Rabba.

* Mr. Schön's Journal, p. 61. † Ibid. p. 231.
‡ Dr. MacWilliam, p. 61.
§ Captain W. Allen's Report, P.P. p. 137.

The treaty having been formally concluded with Obi, for the abolition of the slave trade in his dominions, for the protection and encouragement of legitimate commerce, and for the permission to missionaries to settle among his people, and presents having been given to him as a mark of good will, the expedition proceeded towards Iddah, the capital of Eggarah.

A great change soon took place in the scenery: the banks of the river had hitherto been flat; but now "elevated land," says Mr. Crowther, "was gradually peeping behind the thick bushes on the banks of the river; and the faces of all were bright at the sight of these long-looked-for places."

The amount of cultivation of yams, bananas, and plantains indicated more extensive habitation than had yet been seen, with the exception of Aboh. At Iddah, in the kingdom of Eggarah, the opposite shore is for some way low, flat, and swampy. The land behind, however, gradually rises to hills of considerable height, which seemed to be richly wooded. From the anchorage (within 200 yards of the cliff) a magnificent range of rounded and conical hills and high table-land was seen in the distance, stretching from north-east to south-west with a dense forest, extending from the table-land downwards, through which a series of streams were pursuing curiously tortuous courses, until they joined the main stream of the Niger, a short distance above the town of Iddah.* Some of the officers went into the country, and were much pleased with its openness and beauty. Here and there some nice plantations fenced in contained cassada, yams, pompions, Indian corn, and sugar-cane, all kept clean, and in the best condition of

* Dr. MacWilliam, p. 70.

culture.* The people were found to be industrious, and more advanced in civilisation than their neighbours lower down the river: their grounds much better cultivated, manufactures more encouraged, and their social comforts increasing.† Mr. Crowther, however, himself a negro, received an unpleasant impression of the inhabitants of Iddah. "As they were rude in their appearance," he says, "so were they in their manners, for they made it no matter of consideration whatever to put their hands on any part of our dress, which, considering how dirty they were, was not at all agreeable. * * * If I had met with a wild people before, this was one of that kind." ‡

The population of Iddah was calculated at about 7000 souls. Their king, the Attah of Eggarah, appears to have been much less intelligent and civilised than Obi. A similar treaty, however, was concluded with him. During the interview between him and the commissioners, he now and then made a remark, and inquired about things which at first did not appear clear to him; and every word he said, or remark he made, fully proved that he understood what was said to him.§ The treaty was signed with all due formality, in the presence and with the full concurrence of his head-men and the principal people of the town.‖ "One of these, Lobo, the chief judge, was a fine-looking person, very handsomely dressed," writes Captain W. Allen. "His manners and appearance were indeed so dignified and elegant that he, at least, could not be classed among the uncivilised."

* Capt. W. Allen's and Dr. Thomson's Narrative of the Niger Expedition, I. p. 308.
† Ibid. 326. ‡ Mr. Crowther's Journal, p. 291.
§ Mr. Schön, p. 92.
‖ Despatch from the Commissioners, P.P. p. 37.

"Up to this time (the conclusion of the treaty with the Attah of Eggarah) the Expedition," says Dr. MacWilliam, "had been fortunate beyond all expectation. The Delta had been passed, and we were entering the valley of the Niger, under circumstances seemingly the most auspicious. The crews contemplated with delight the novel and diversified scenery of the high land before them. With such prospects, so favourable beyond all anticipation, it is not to be wondered at if we indulged a rather sanguine hope that the continuance of health would be granted to us, and that we should, under Providence, thus be enabled to persevere in the great object of our mission But it was otherwise ordained." *

On the 4th of September fever of a most malignant character broke out in the Albert, and almost simultaneously in the other vessels. The Expedition, notwithstanding, proceeded towards the confluence of the Niger and Tchadda.†

The country was remarkably well cultivated, and in excellent order; plantains, yams, Indian corn, and cotton being still the principal occupants of the soil.‡ The villagers had large farms of Guinea corn, which grew beautifully, and did credit to their industry.§ The town of Adda Kuddu was found to be in a ruinous condition, having been destroyed by the Fulatahs. The soil was a rich vegetable mould. Castor oil, cotton, indigo, and other plants were abundant.‖ Mr. Schön observed a mallam or priest wearing a silk robe of native manufacture; the weaving was done remarkably well; the silk could not weigh less than seven or eight pounds.¶

An agreement had already been made with the Attah for the cession of land at the confluence for a model

* Dr. MacWilliam, p. 74.
† Captain Trotter's Report, P.P. p. 91.
‡ Mr. Schön, p. 106.
§ Mr. Crowther, p. 295.
‖ Dr. MacWilliam, p. 77.
¶ Mr. Schön, p. 116.

farm. A tract of land was chosen near Mount Patteh, where the soil, although not of the best quality, grew a considerable quantity of cotton*, and there seemed every probability that coffee would grow on the hills.†

The natives of these parts were exposed to the ravages of the slave-trading Fulatahs: but, as the Commissioners observed —

"The mere occupation of one or two stations by a few British subjects would have the effect of establishing confidence among the natives, who once assured of the protecting care of Great Britain, would be easily induced to build up their former habitations, and thus furnish an useful population, and have a beneficial effect on the surrounding tribes." ‡

These observations coincided exactly with Mr. Macqueen's opinion (formed from the reports of previous travellers), who wrote with reference to a settlement at the confluence, that "a city built at that point, under the protecting wings of Great Britain, would, ere long, become the capital of Africa. Fifty millions of people, nay, even a greater number, would be dependent on it."§

As soon as the land had been selected for the model farm, the people in the vicinity brought abundance of provisions to the new settlement for sale, and those who had nothing to dispose of came and hired themselves as labourers: nothing could exceed the good feeling shown by the natives on every occasion.‖ Cotton cloths of good manufacture, spun cotton, calabashes beautifully carved and ornamented, tobacco, camwood balls, shea butter, dried buffalo flesh, and

* Despatch from the Commissioners, P.P. p. 41.
† Mr. Schön, p. 118.
‡ Despatch from the Commissioners, P.P. p. 41.
§ Quoted in the "Slave Trade and Remedy," p. 356.
‖ Mr. Cook's Report, P.P. p. 159.

dried fish, were brought on board in great quantities. As with most Africans, traffic seemed to be the predominant passion with the people, with a good share of dexterity in turning a bargain to their own account.*

"So far," says Mr. Commissioner Cook, "the object of the Expedition had been attained, and everything promised a favourable termination to the mission." But now the sickness on board increased with such appalling rapidity that Captain Trotter deemed it advisable to send the sick back to the sea in the Soudan, in charge of Lieutenant Fishbourne, who displayed equal zeal and ability in rapidly bringing the vessel through the difficult navigation of the river, notwithstanding the disabled state of the crew. At the mouth of the Nun, the Dolphin, Commander Littlehales, fortunately encountered the Soudan, and immediately relieved her of the sick, conveying them to Ascension.

The intelligence that the Soudan had returned to Fernando Po, and that nine men had died of the fever, reached England in the beginning of December. It may well be conceived how this news was felt by the friends of the cause in England. Sir Fowell Buxton writes to his son: —

"Northrepps Hall, Dec. 4. 1841.

"I was very glad to receive your letter, reminding me that, in such a storm, there is but one anchor; but that one all sufficient. The blow, however, is tremendous. There is no comfort to be found under it, save in the assurance that it is the will and the work of our merciful God. Mysterious it certainly is, but could we survey the whole, there can be no doubt we should perceive that all was done in true mercy and never-failing love. Our text for the day has been, 'Therefore will we not fear, though the earth be removed, and though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea.' The sympathy of dear Catherine's letter was quite charming—it has been a great comfort

* Dr. MacWilliam, p. 83.

both to my wife and me. I think Sir Robert Inglis could not have done a better thing than asking the Bishop to prepare a prayer for us. How extremely gratified I shall be if a day is appointed for the purpose!"

To the same.

"December 6. 1841.

"Even now I do not wish the whole effort undone. A way, I firmly believe, is opened for the missionary into the heart of Africa, and we have found, in some respects, greater facilities than we expected. And is the price we have to pay so intolerably heavy? Is the loss of nine men enough to damp all our zeal, and quench all our courage? Would it have been enough if we had been at war with the French, or the Americans, or even the Chinese, to stop us? Would the public feeling have been quite satisfied if it were said, 'Why, we have lost nine men; we must give over; it would be madness to fight any longer!' Oh! but war with France is quite a different case; great national interests are concerned. And are no interests concerned in the overthrow of the slave trade, in the spread of Gospel light over the darkness of Africa, in the addition of a fourth quarter to the productions and the requirements of the world? Not only the interests of the nation, but those of human nature, are concerned in this expedition; and it is not a trifle that shall put us to flight. Perhaps these very calamities have been sent in order to try us, and to ascertain whether we have faith enough, sufficient reliance on the promises of God to hear our prayers, and to be near us in our trials. It may be that, after all, a better day is now dawning for Africa, and I am disposed to believe that this is the fact, and that if we do our part manfully we shall not be defeated, even in this very expedition."

The next tidings which reached England did not confirm this hope. The sickness still continuing, Captain Trotter was compelled, on the 21st of September, to direct the Wilberforce to follow the Soudan to the sea, whilst he and Captain Bird Allen pushed forward in the Albert in hopes of reaching Rabba, a very large town, the capital of the Fulatahs. After leaving the confluence,

the banks of the river were found to be better peopled, and "a great many villages" were observed. In the market-place of Gori were not less than from 1500 to 2000 people. The articles exposed for sale were bags of salt from Rabba, tobes of various colours, country cloths, camwood in balls, iron-work, as hoes and shovels, Indian corn, ground nuts, twine, silk, seeds of various kinds, shea butter, straw hats with enormous brims, platters of wood, and calabashes beautifully carved.*

Mr. Schön also mentions "several large bags of cotton in its raw state." He asserts that the price of cotton there could not be less than in England; but, he adds, "it is true that they might grow ten thousand times the quantity they are now growing.† The trade of dyeing blue was carried on there: the blacksmith was busy at his anvil, and the grinders of the Guinea corn at the stones." ‡

The district of Gori is dependent on the Attah of Eggarah, and, accordingly, the treaty formed with him was acknowledged as binding by the inhabitants. Captain Trotter, having found there some slaves in a canoe, liberated them after a formal trial. The owners pleaded ignorance of the new law, and were therefore suffered to retain the canoe. The poor slaves fell on their knees to Captain Trotter in token of gratitude for their liberation. Both the owner of the slaves, and the son of the Attah, who attended the trial as his father's representative, at once acquiesced in the justice of Captain Trotter's decision. §

When some weeks afterwards the Albert descended the river, the Commissioners found that at Budda, the

* Dr. MacWilliam, p. 87.
† Mr. Schön, p. 143.
‡ Mr. Crowther, p. 305.
§ Captain Trotter's Report, P.P. p. 96.

farthest point of the Attah's territory, he had faithfully proclaimed the law against slave trading: —

"The inhabitants," says Mr. Schön, "candidly admitted that Budda had ever been a great slave market, but said that from the time they heard that the Attah abolished the slave trade they relinquished it altogether. They were glad to hear that an English settlement had been commenced at the confluence, and said that they would go and see how white people built houses and made farms; and they would settle near them to be protected from the Fulatahs. The same desire was expressed at Kinami, a few miles farther, — the first village in the Nufi country, which is tributary to the powerful and warlike Fulatah nation, who keep the Nufis in continual terror. The inhabitants of Kinami are estimated at 1000 by Captain Trotter. They occupy themselves in weaving, and carry on some trade with Egga, in country cloths, ivory, and bees' wax."

The Albert reached Egga, the largest Nufi town, on the 28th of September.

Some alarm was found to have been excited there by the news of the seizure of the slaves at Gori. But when the nature of the treaty under which the seizure had taken place was explained to the Governor, he was quite satisfied, and expressed himself desirous that the slave trade should also be abolished in the Nufi country.* He, however, declined entering into any treaty without the permission of his superior, the king of Rabba: stating, that he did not think the Fulatahs would be willing to relinquish the slave trade. Mr. Schön spoke very earnestly upon the subject to a slave dealer in the market. The man replied, "that all he said was very true, and that if the King of Rabba would make a law against it, he should be as glad of it as any person, and that the people in general would willingly give it up."

* Captain Trotter's Report, P. P. p. 97.

"To gain over the Fulatahs," adds Mr. Schön, "is certainly a most desirable thing, as then the axe would be laid to the root of the slave trade in this part of Africa."*

Egga was the largest town yet seen on the banks of the river; the population was reckoned at seven or eight thousand.† The people were in general tall and well made; the form of the head, the countenance, and the lighter shade of the colour of the skin, indicated an intermixture of the Caucasian with the Negro race.‡

At Egga the manufacturing of country cloths was found to be the principal occupation of the people. There were no less than 200 looms employed in various parts of the town, sometimes as many as ten in one place. The looms are very simple, and the cloth uncommonly neat, never being wider than three inches: some is quite white; some striped, white, blue, and red. The dye is likewise made by themselves: the blue colour is made with indigo, of which they possess a large quantity, dye-pits being seen everywhere; the red colour is obtained from camwood.§ "The people desired me," says Mr. Crowther, "to tell them what kind of country cloth I should like, that they might get it ready against our coming this way again."‖

The cotton is purchased from the left bank of the river, where it is said to grow in great abundance. They commence planting it after the first fall of rain, and five months afterwards it is fit for use.¶

At Egga, Captain Trotter had reached a point 320 miles from the sea. He had accomplished his object with respect to two of the three kingdoms to which he

* Mr. Schön, p. 178.
† Ibid. p. 180.
‡ Dr. MacWilliam, p. 92.
§ Mr. Schön, p. 174.
‖ Mr. Schön, p. 331.
¶ Ibid. p. 157.

had been sent; but he was now compelled to relinquish his hope of completing his work by reaching the town of Rabba. "A very little mediation on our parts," he observes, "might probably have had the effect of making the Nufi nation more independent, and less oppressed, and have tended materially to the diminution of the slave trade."* But the sickness on board had become so very alarming, that it was found absolutely necessary, on the 4th of October, to steam down the river with all speed. Captain Bird Allen, who had been most anxious to persevere, and in fact almost all the officers and men on board, except the negroes, were seized with the deadly fever. Captain Trotter himself was at length disabled by it: and at this critical period the engineers also were too ill to perform their duty! Dr. Stranger (the geologist), however, having learned how to manage the engines from a scientific treatise on board, undertook to work them himself; and Dr. MacWilliam, in addition to his laborious duties in attending the sick, conducted the ship down the river, with the assistance of only one white sailor, "in the most able and judicious manner."

"One of the officers," writes Mr. Schön on the 8th of October, "is apparently dying; many are still suffering; and others, though free from fever, are in such a state of debility that they will not be able to do duty for a considerable time. * * * Nothing that I have hitherto seen or felt can be compared with our present condition." "Yet," he afterwards adds, "there was not one of those whom I attended in their sickness and at their death, but who knew perfectly well that the climate of Africa was dangerous in the extreme, and had *counted the cost* before engaging in the hazardous undertaking. And, to their honour be it mentioned, no expression of disappointment or regret did I ever hear; on the contrary, they appeared in

* Despatch from Captain Trotter, P. P. p. 44.

general to derive no small consolation from the conscious purity of their motives, and the goodness of the cause in which they had voluntarily embarked."*

"When the Albert approached the model farm," says Dr. MacWilliam, "the quantity of cleared land and the advance made in the building of the superintendent's house induced us to hope that he and the two Europeans had been mercifully protected from disease; but in these hopes we were doomed to disappointment." †

Mr. Carr, Mr. Kingdon, and Mr. Ansell were all ill, and had to be taken on board. But the negroes, none of whom had suffered from the fever, were left at the settlement, under the care of Mr. Moor, an American negro. The Amelia schooner was left at anchor with a black crew for the protection of the settlers. The natives had shown a great readiness to engage as labourers at the model farm. "They had been on all occasions most friendly to the settlers, and abundance of provisions and labour had been easily procured at a moderate price." ‡

Dr. MacWilliam informs us that when the Albert reached Aboh —

"Obi and his people brought abundance of wood, besides goats, fowls, yams, and plantains. His prompt assistance to us on this occasion was of the highest importance. He is decidedly a fine character, and assuredly did not discredit the high opinion we had already formed of him. He was melted into pity when he saw the captains sick in the cabin."

While the Albert was still a hundred miles from the sea, its disabled crew were surprised and delighted by seeing a steamer coming up the stream towards them. It proved to be the Ethiope, commanded by Captain Beecroft, who had been directed by Mr. Jamieson to

* Mr. Schön, p. 243.
† Dr. MacWilliam, p. 99.
‡ Ibid. p. 100.

afford every assistance to the Expedition. This timely assistance was of the greatest importance. Captain Beecroft and his engineer took charge of the Albert, and brought her in safety to Fernando Po. It was hoped that Captain Bird Allen and his gallant fellow-sufferers would rapidly revive under the influence of its purer air; but many were already too much sunk to receive benefit, and the mortality was most painful. Of the 301 persons who composed the Expedition when it commenced the ascent of the Niger, forty-one perished from the African fever. It may be worth while to observe, that of about 150 Africans on board not one died from the effects of the disease. Captain Bird Allen fell a victim to it, at Fernando Po, on the 21st of October.

Thus failed the NIGER EXPEDITION. From the facts stated by all the different gentlemen who were on board, and who have written accounts of what they saw, and also from the direct assertions of the four commissioners, it would appear that nothing but the climate prevented the Expedition from fulfilling the most sanguine hopes of its promoters.

"On its own part it possessed, in vain," as was remarked by a contemporary writer, "all that modern science and human skill — all that undaunted courage and determined enterprise—could contribute to success. To its officers and men, dead as well as living, the highest credit appears to be due; they conquered every thing but impossibilities; nature they could not conquer, and they only ceased to persevere when the survivors had almost ceased to live."*

* The opinion of the Government is given in the following letter from the Under Secretary for the Colonies, G. W. Hope, Esq., to Captain Trotter, R. N.

"Sir, "Downing Street, April 3. 1842.

"I am directed by Lord Stanley to acknowledge the receipt of your

On the other hand, the natives proved to be far more inclined to trade, and far less barbarous and disorganised, than could have been supposed possible in so secluded a part of Africa. They eagerly sought the protection of the British from their slave-trading oppressors, the Fulatahs; and that protection it would have been perfectly easy to give. The country, although some thought it less fertile than had been anticipated, was found to produce cotton, sugar-cane, coffee, indigo, ginger, arrow-root, dyewoods, magnificent timber for ship-building, palm-oil, and many other important articles of commerce. Ivory also was frequently seen.

"The banks of the Niger," writes Captain W. Allen, "are populous, with the exception of the neighbourhood of the Mangrove Swamps: but wherever man has been able to get a firm footing, he has cleared away a patch for cultivation, and has built his hut. These are found to increase rapidly as we ascend the river. Large villages, towns, and even populous cities are met with. The banks of the Tchadda, however, have been almost depopulated by the frequent slave-catching expeditions. The country on both sides nevertheless is capable of supporting prodigious numbers: the luxuriance of the vegetation is beyond belief, and the palm-tree, which would form a groundwork for national wealth and prosperity, grows in the greatest abundance. * * * The strongest characteristic of the people is the love of traffic; it is indeed their ruling passion. Every town has a market, generally once in four days: but the principal feature is in the large fairs held at different points in the river, about once a fortnight, for what may be called their

letter of March 15., transmitting your Report of the Proceedings of the late Niger Expedition entrusted to your command.

"His Lordship desires me to take this opportunity of conveying to yourself, and to the other Members of the late Expedition, an expression of the sense entertained by his Lordship of the zeal and ability manifested by yourself and those under your command, in the attempt to execute the objects of the Expedition, under very difficult circumstances, and at great personal risk to all who were engaged in it. "I am, &c.

"G. W. HOPE."

foreign trade, or intercourse with neighbouring nations.† * * * Here, then, we have an immense and highly productive country, at no great distance from our shores, and which may even be said to diminish daily by the improvements in steam navigation. The nations inhabiting this valuable region are desirous of being supplied with our manufactures. * * * If the only interchangeable commodities were salt and palm-oil, a profitable trade might be extended to the interior, and yet, with such vast resources and capabilities on both sides, the exports from the greatest commercial country in the world, which is seeking on all sides an outlet for its manufactures, is less than half a million sterling."‡

The chiefs were quite ready to enter into treaties; and Captain W. Allen emphatically declares:—

"I have no doubt that if the climate had not opposed a barrier to frequent intercourse, those treaties would have been mainly instrumental in putting an effectual stop to the traffic in slaves, in the waters subject to those chiefs. The principles of humanity, so new to them, which we expounded, were received with great satisfaction; and all classes earnestly desired the presence of British influence as the surest means of ameliorating their condition, and of procuring a cessation of the wars which now desolate the country. Very small means, such as the occasional passage up and down the river of Her Majesty's steamers, would have been sufficient for this purpose.

"* * * The voice of vituperation has loudly charged the Expedition with total failure. This, I may boldly say, is not true; for although the lamentable loss of life which it suffered had the effect of preventing the accomplishment of all the objects for which it was equipped, its success, until our exertions were paralysed by sickness, was complete; since we were able to make satisfactory treaties with two of the three most powerful chiefs that are known. * * * It is much to be deplored that the single obstacle of the climate should have thwarted all the great efforts which have been made for the benefit of Africa."§

† Captain W. Allen's Narrative, i. p. 379. ‡ Ibid. i. 407.
§ Captain W. Allen's Report, P.P. pp. 135. 138.

It was the climate also, and the climate alone, that prevented the Expedition from being the herald of Christianity to West Africa. The disposition of the natives was found to be eminently favourable to the settlement of missionaries among them.

"Their conduct," says Captain Trotter, "not only at the model farm, but on all other occasions that came under my notice, is a subject to which I feel much pleasure in adverting; as during the entire period in which the vessels under my command were in the Niger, not only the native chiefs of the country, but the people in general, evinced the most friendly disposition towards us, and this not only during our prosperity, whilst going up the river, but also in our forlorn condition when coming down. * * * I may remark, that the desire evinced by the natives in the neighbourhood of the model farm to be taught the Christian religion, gives me reason to believe that, when the day happily arrives of missionaries reaching that part of Africa, they will be gladly welcomed by the inhabitants."*

In a despatch addressed to Lord J. Russell from Iddah, the four commissioners expressly state their belief that "Christian missionaries and teachers may be safely† and advantageously introduced into this part of Africa; a measure which, by the blessing of Almighty God, would tend effectually, in our opinion, to enlighten this unhappy country, and to put an end for ever to the abominable slave trade."‡

* Captain Trotter's Report, p. 105.
† At that time there had not been any appearance of fever on board.
‡ Despatch from the Commissioners, P.P. p. 38.

CHAPTER XXXII.

1842, 1843.

DECLINING HEALTH. — EFFORTS AND VIEWS REGARDING AFRICA. — THE MODEL FARM BROKEN UP. — LETTER FROM THE BISHOP OF CALCUTTA. — COUNTRY PURSUITS. — PLANTING. — CHARACTERISTIC ANECDOTES.

It may well be conceived with what anguish Sir Fowell Buxton received the melancholy tidings of the Niger Expedition. Deeply did he sympathise with the sufferings of the brave men who had attempted to carry out his plans; nor was he less dejected at feeling that the door was closed, for the present at least, through which he had hoped that so many blessings might have been poured upon Africa. His health, which had been undermined before, became gradually more feeble, and he could no longer bear any sustained mental exertion, especially if attended by any sense of responsibility. To a man, the law of whose nature it was to be at work, with head, hand, and heart, it was no slight trial to be thus prematurely laid aside. He was only fifty-five years of age; but already the evening was come of his day of ceaseless toil; nor was its close brightened by the beams of success and joy. The idea of what he so forcibly termed "the incomparable horrors" of the slave trade had fastened itself on his mind with the most vivid reality; the burning and plundered villages of Africa, the ships traversing the Atlantic with their cargoes of torture; these pictures were ever before him. When unconscious that he was observed, he would at times utter such groans as if his heart were sinking

beneath its load. But his grief was not of that kind described by an old divine*, which "runs out in voice." He rarely spoke of the Expedition, — to Captain Bird Allen's death he could scarcely allude at all; but his grave demeanour, his worn pale face, the abstraction of his manner, and the intense fervour of his supplications that God would "pity poor Africa,"—these showed too well the poignancy of his feelings.

And yet the three years which elapsed between the failure of the Niger Expedition and his death were brightened by not a few gleams of domestic happiness; by many country pleasures; by the great satisfaction of receiving, in the main, good tidings of the working of emancipation in the West Indies; by some encouragements about Africa; but, above all, by the exercise of faith, and the consolations of religion. During all that period he was humble, patient, and resigned in an extraordinary degree; and especially was his heart overflowing with love to all around him, and with the living spirit of thanksgiving and prayer. His correspondence, after the lamentable issue of the Expedition, shows that his mind did not sink under discouragement; and although he candidly admitted the ruin of his own scheme, he yet cherished hopes that the same great end might be achieved in some other and better way.

To the Rev. J. M. Trew Sir Fowell thus expressed his feelings, when he received the last painful accounts: —

"I need not tell you the grief excited by your heavy tidings. I mourn from my inmost heart. But what can I say? It has pleased God to send us a *deep disappointment* — a personal, as well as public calamity of no common kind. That dear Bird Allen; — his long illness — the sickness and suffering so griev-

* Dr. South.

ously prevailing: that gallant fellow Stenhouse—poor Willie—and the others! A mercy indeed it is to have had Trotter spared. * * * Now we must meet the case fairly, and we cannot conceal from ourselves that this effort for this time has been frustrated. The Government seem to decide the question for us by recalling the Expedition, and our course so far is clearly pointed out—to pause till Captain Trotter's return, till we have the facts fully before us, till they have been digested. It may then appear that from the ruins of this enterprise another may arise, consisting of negroes; or it may appear that single missionaries must do the work. The call seems to me to be very distinct,—to be still, to wait in faith and submission for further light, and for our Master's will, concerning His own work."

What he still could do, he did with his usual energy; and amid all his own sorrow he strove to maintain the hopes of others. In a letter to the Rev. C. W. Bingham, after alluding to the mortality on board the vessels, he adds—

"But, on the other hand, the natives received us kindly; they had no objection to our making settlements in the country; they supplied us with provisions, and sold us land; they have entered into treaties for the abolition, both of the slave trade and of human sacrifices; and seem only more desirous to receive, than we can be to send them, missionaries and instructors. This looks as if 'the set time were come,' and makes me hold fast to conviction, that, although *we* may fail, and *our* plans prove worthless, the day is at hand when the right methods will be devised, and when Africa will be delivered. God grant that that happy day may soon arrive!"

"Your favourite oracle," he writes to Miss Gurney, "thunders forth every day a leading article against me, and attacks me in poetry and prose; all of which does not excite a moment's vexation in my mind. * * * At all events, we must not desert Africa till we see that all exertions are useless." He earnestly hoped that the

discouragement would not preclude further efforts. Thus he writes:—

"Grant, for the sake of argument, that events have confuted my 'Remedy;' that the latter half of my book be proved to be mere nonsense; yet the former part remains intact. No one denies the enormous number of human beings whom the slave trade annually devours. Because one plan has failed, are we to submit in patience to this incomparable evil? Because we erred in one attempt to subdue it, are we henceforward to act as if we were reconciled to the abomination; as if one abortive effort were all that humanity pleads for, or that is required at our hands by the Gospel of Christ? Again, our exertions have *not* been wholly useless. At all events we know one thing which we did not know before. We know how the evil is to be cured; that it is to be done by native agency; by coloured ministers of the Gospel. Africa is to be delivered by her own sons!"

Strongly impressed with these feelings, he went to London early in February, and passed a few weeks at the house of his son; giving all the strength he could muster to meetings and consultations on the subject. The whole spring was spent in a succession of painful efforts to gather some benefit for Africa from the wreck of the Niger Expedition. The model farm was still in existence; and to obtain the promise of an occasional visit to it from a Government steamer was one of the principal objects at which he earnestly aimed. The heads of the African Civilisation Society obtained an interview with Lord Stanley, which Sir Fowell thus describes:—

"We entered the chamber of the great man, anxious, I take it,—and one at least having on his lips and in his heart, 'O Lord, give us good speed this day.'

"Lord Stanley received us very kindly, and Lushington opened our case with great skill, and boldness too. How hearty my prayer had been for him and for myself, that utter-

ance might be given to us, that we might 'speak with all boldness as we ought to speak.' Then followed Sir Robert Inglis, saying strong things in a very mild voice, and in a very gentle manner. Then Acland put in a few words extremely well: and then I spoke; contending that, one point excepted, that of the climate, we had met with success in every particular, and that it would be most wicked and shameful to abandon Africa in consequence of anything that had occurred. After hearing all we had to say, he offered, very frankly, to send round the Cabinet any paper which we should transmit to him, embodying our ideas, and stating what we wished."

Upon Sir Fowell's return to Northrepps he received a visit from the Rev. J. F. Schön, of the Church Missionary Society, who had been chaplain to the Niger Expedition. Sir Fowell tells his nephew and faithful coadjutor, Mr. Gurney Hoare, March 24., —

"Schön has been staying a week with me. I perceive that he attaches the deepest importance to the intercourse which would be produced with Africa by the retention of the model farm. If you and Cook and Samuel Gurney cannot concur with me in my anxious desire to give the model farm one fair chance, but feel that it must be abandoned, even before the first crop has been harvested, I will thank you to summon a meeting of all the subscribers, in most urgent terms, and I will come up in order to make the forlorn attempt to obtain a majority for going on a little longer. God grant that we may be wisely directed in this very important matter."

A public meeting of the African Civilisation Society was to be held in June: he wrote many letters on the subject, but was unable to take a part in the meeting.

To Dr. Lushington.

"May 14. 1842.

"I try to whip myself up to some exertion; but it is all in vain, *I can do nothing;* the truth is, you and I feel the effects of the last quarter of a century. * * * How do you like

Peel's new tariff? I look at it, as at everything else, with an eye to Africa; and I think lowering the duty on timber, rice, and many other things, can hardly fail to be productive of benefit to us."

To Lord Ashley (Chairman of the Meeting alluded to).

"My dear Lord Ashley, "Northrepps, June 18. 1842.

"It is no little aggravation of the trial of my present ill health, that it prevents me from attending the meeting of our Society. I need hardly assure you that I retain an unaltered conviction on two points, viz. that whatever discouragements we may meet with, it is our duty to persevere; and again, that the Lord of compassion and righteousness is, and will be, with those who faithfully labour for the purpose of rescuing millions of the human race, not only from their moral darkness, but from the intense sufferings which they now endure. May He hasten the day when the Gospel, with its train of attendant blessings, shall shine forth upon Africa.

"I am very thankful that, although I am debarred from taking my share of labour, your lordship and other faithful men are still prosecuting the good cause."

Nothing could be stronger than the contrast between the exulting hopes of the meeting in 1840, and the sorrowful tidings which were to be communicated to the one now convened; nevertheless its tone was less desponding than had been feared.

Lord John Russell, with his usual courage, came forward and took a prominent part in the proceedings, boldly asserting the soundness of the principles on which the schemes had been founded. The present Bishop of Oxford spoke with hereditary eloquence and feeling. He fully admitted the disappointment, but, like Lord John Russell, he did not fear to uphold the principles which had actuated them, the righteousness of the cause, and the certainty of ultimate success, if discouragement did not paralyse their exertions.

Among the speakers were the Bishops of Gloucester and Norwich, Lords Mahon, Sandon, Teignmouth, and Fortescue, Sir R. H. Inglis, and Sir T. D. Acland.

To Lord John Russell.

"My dear Lord John, "June 23. 1842.

"You must excuse me for giving you the trouble of reading a line from me, but I feel personally so obliged to you for your well-timed and powerful assistance, and for your generosity in coming forward publicly, and claiming your share of the obloquy which has been cast on us, that I must be permitted to offer you my most sincere thanks. The effects of the late meeting will not, I am persuaded, be lost. It has already put us in better spirits, and will, I trust, convince the country that the efforts made to reclaim and civilise Africa are not so wild and visionary as they have been described."

It may be supposed how soothing to his feelings, at this time, was the following letter from his highly valued friend, the Bishop of Calcutta:—

"Bishop's Palace, Calcutta,
April 9. 1842.

"Be not cast down, my dearest friend; yield not to disappointment and sorrow; all will work for good. The grand blow is struck; the monster must fall like Dagon before the ark; and your honest, devoted, anxious heart shall yet be comforted with blessed tidings: and indeed, when we consider how little we worms of the earth can scan the designs of an infinite Being, we need not wonder that grief and disquietude sometimes follow on our best concerted schemes. Supposing all our hopes to fail, Providence has other ways of bringing about the redemption of the enslaved population of Africa.

"Let us, then, go on cheerfully in the use of all such means as are open to us, and new and unsuspected blessings will arise in due time. Gird up the loins of your mind; be sober and hope to the end. Nothing we do for God in the cause of humanity is lost either to the cause or to ourselves. Soon, soon the tempest will be calmed; soon life will be past; soon the

heavenly port will open to our frail and weatherbeaten bark, and we shall have reached that 'good land.' * * *

"Ever believe me

"Your sincere and affectionate friend,

"D. CALCUTTA."

In July, 1842, Lieutenant Webb courageously volunteered to go up the Niger in the Wilberforce to visit the model farm. He found the settlers all well: a large portion of ground had been cleared; and from twenty to thirty acres were "in good order, mainly planted with cotton, the growing crops of which were very promising." *

"Of native labour there had been no scarcity, the numbers employed being frequently 100 men, women, and boys; on one day 236 were fully occupied. They worked nine hours per diem, and received three pence each in cowries. Seven houses and four huts had been erected. * * * Well-supplied markets were regularly held at the farm and in the surrounding villages. †

"The security which the establishment afforded from the constant inroads of the slave-hunters had induced numbers of the persecuted tribes to settle in the neighbourhood, and to cultivate much more extensively and carefully than before. * * * The natives were most peaceable, friendly, and industrious. The Bassas (a neighbouring tribe) are described as a quiet and intelligent people; and extremely desirous of learning the manners and customs of Europeans; very obedient and industrious." ‡

* Lieutenant Webb's Report, P.P. p. 75.

† "They were," says Captain W. Allen, "mostly small well-made active men, and their manners particularly mild and agreeable. * * * The innate modesty and gentleness of the women made them appear very prepossessing." Mount Patteh is described as being almost covered with luxuriant crops of corn, yams, millet, &c.; and the natives appeared to have some idea of the rotation of crops; but the slave-trading Fulatahs were the terror of the country.

‡ Account of the Model Farm. — *Friend of Africa.* Dec. 1842.

On the other hand, owing to the murder of Mr. Carr, while returning to the model farm from Fernando Po, the settlers had been deprived of all effective superintendence. Mr. Moore, the negro in charge, had no authority over his companions; and, in consequence, the most complete disorganisation had taken place. These evils Lieutenant Webb expected to remedy by leaving Mr. Hensman, the surgeon *pro tempore* of the Wilberforce, as superintendent; but sickness appearing on board, Mr. Hensman could not be spared. Lieutenant Webb therefore broke up the settlement, and brought all the people away.

"This necessity, however," he says, "I could not help regretting, because I felt that we were retiring from a position of great advantage, whether regarded as an inland point from which commerce and civilisation might be expected to diffuse their blessings through the neighbouring countries, or as a point of refuge for the fugitive negroes, seeking to avoid slavery, where they might become acquainted with the advantages of our protection, and possibly in time form a considerable colony under our rule."

The tribes which had collected round the farm expressed the deepest regret at its being removed; and even displeasure, that the white man should come and sit down among them, "to teach them his fashion," and then go away. One man said that the Bassas would "go down to meet" another expedition. For a moment Sir Fowell's equanimity was ruffled by this bitter disappointment.

"As to the model farm," he writes to Mr. Trew, "it makes one mad to think that it was going on so well—*our* experiment likely to be successful,—and that they were torn away because Lieutenant Webb had not a superintendent to spare them. However, all regrets are kept down by the reflection that at the head of our cause stands One who cannot err."

In October Sir Fowell had the gratification of hearing that Captain Bosanquet had offered to the African Society his gratuitous services to conduct another expedition up the Niger, together with a donation of 500*l.* towards the expenses of it. In replying to a letter of thanks addressed to him by Sir Fowell, Captain Bosanquet writes: "My whole heart is embarked in the cause of our black brethren, and what little talent and energy I am possessed of shall be used towards the success of the expedition, if sent out."

The Committee of the Society was convened to take this proposal into consideration: it was gratefully received by them, but they found themselves compelled to decline it.

To Dr. Lushington.

"Northrepps, May 22. 1842.

"I am much obliged to you for telling me what passed between Sir Robert Inglis and yourself on the subject of his meditated Church of England Society for Africa. I can have no doubt about my course. I am quite ready and willing to unite with him; he shall freely have my subscription, and what little service my shattered frame can give. Only I hope they will not expel me for giving my money also to any right-hearted Dissenters who will endeavour to befriend Africa, for I shall not refuse that, and my earnest good wishes, to every sincere Christian who sets about this work of charity in his own way. I am extremely sorry that you and I do not see this one point in exactly the same light. But though we differ *pro hâc vice*, there shall be no separation between us—so do not expect it. Why, man, have you not borne, for the last twenty years, more than half my burden? and have you ever failed to render me every assistance which could be furnished by your better judgment, your greater experience, and your unquenchable industry, and am I to let you off so easily at last? However, I am called away to shoot with my boys."

To his younger Sons, at Trinity College, Cambridge.

"My dear Fowell and Charles, "Northrepps, Feb. 1843.

"Our Sabbath day's business is over, and our family reading finished. Well, you have been much in all our minds to-day. I hope it has been a tranquillising day to you, and that, knowing that you have each done your best, you are satisfied in committing yourselves and the result of the examination to Him whose province it is to decide what shall be the issue of every effort. You must bear in mind, that though you may lose the places at which you aim, you will not therefore lose the advantage of your studies. The knowledge you have acquired, and your habits of application, will in great measure cleave to you all your life long. Despite all my philosophy, however, I shall most heartily rejoice in your success.

"Now, God bless you! May you not forget to pray for help, knowing that it is expressly promised to those who humbly and devoutly ask it, 'Commit your way unto the Lord, and he shall bring it to pass.'"

In January, 1843, Sir Fowell proceeded to London, to bear his part in the painful duty of dissolving the African Civilisation Society. In reply to the summons to attend the meeting, he says, in a letter to the Rev. J. M. Trew, "I feel as if I were going to attend the funeral of an old and dear friend." After the resolutions for suspending the operations of the Society had been passed, he addressed the meeting in a tone of deep feeling. He warmly thanked the Committee for their past exertions, and, although he insisted strongly that the Expedition had not failed in any one of its great objects, still he admitted that there was a necessity for the step which had now been taken. He alluded to the attacks of the papers, but added that, "painfully as he felt all the disasters which had attended the Expedition, he did not accuse himself of having been imprudent or over-sanguine in the measures which he had proposed."

That all human means for success had been tried was the feeling of all who saw closely into the subject. Lord Monteagle writes, December, 1842:—

"I am very sorry you cannot give me a more cheerful account of yourself. Everything which acts upon your mind, like the question of the Niger to which you refer, is sure to do more mischief to your health than a mere bodily ailment. But remember that the result is no moral test at all — *eventus stultorum magister*. You have no doubt as to the greatness of the object you sought to accomplish. You have no doubt of the labour and patience which you applied to the investigation of the facts. You have no doubt of the skill, courage, and industry applied to increase all the probabilities of success. Remember it was a case in which after everything had been done which could be done beforehand — after all *d priori* reasoning had been employed — much remained on which no human prescience could have led you to any definite or certain conclusion. Therefore, my dear Buxton, let me most earnestly entreat you not to allow this subject to rest unreasonably on your mind, or interfere with your health or your happiness."

A meeting of the Ladies' Society for educating the Negroes in the West Indies, which he attended about this time, bore a brighter aspect. He writes:—

"I was quite fired by it and cheered. You cannot conceive how well Trew spoke; and Sir Edward Parry capitally too. I came to the conclusion that I ought never to be low, never downcast, all the rest of my pilgrimage, the accounts are so very bright of those for whom my heart used to bleed a few years ago. And these blessings I firmly trust will last long after I shall be mouldering in the dust."

To Andrew Johnston, Esq.

"Northrepps, Feb. 1843.

"Your little Buxton is in great force, and takes very pleasingly to grandpapa: he is a great wit; and, what is better, very happy.

"I have begun to plant again, and make great progress in providing employment for the poor people in this neighbourhood,

which is the first and pleasantest thing in planting, be the second what it may.

" * * * We have much indeed, very much, to be unreservedly thankful for, very much at home, very much at Halesworth, very much at Cambridge, very much at Forest Edge, and at many other places, while, with much submission, we have to be satisfied, though astonished, with the event of the Expedition, and to feel, and to be able to say, 'God's will be done,' although it be in the teeth of our fondest wishes. Another day may yet dawn upon Africa, and I doubt not it will."

Some years before this time he had purchased a small estate at Trimingham, on the coast of Norfolk, four miles from Cromer; and he took great interest in executing various plans for its improvement. One of the farms he retained in his own hands, and took great pains to bring the land into the highest state of cultivation. In 1840 he bought some more land at Runton, on the other side of Cromer, and on both these properties he formed extensive plantations. On commencing them he wrote to Mr. Aubin at Rome: —

" Northrepps, Sept. 5.

" I am now once more settled at home, but as yet I have only been able to get out shooting once. The fact is, I have been buying an estate, where I hope, on some future day, to show you some partridges and a pheasant or two; and I find more sport in the delicious occupation of projecting improvements, and letting the imagination run wild in visions of future woods and groves, which have yet to be planted, than in pursuing preserved game. After all, I like your wild Macarese shooting (bandits, assassins, vipers, and all) better than our tame sport."

These plantations formed his chief amusement during the last years of his life. " His friends," says Mr. J. J. Gurney, " will not fail to remember the lively pleasure which they enjoyed in accompanying him over the hills and dales of Runton and Trimingham, while he pointed

out to them the exquisite views of the sea, already rendered more lovely by the young and rising plantations in the foreground." * Mr. Herbert Johnson, the former proprietor of the Runton estate, was his constant and kind companion in his endeavours to improve it. His plantations were called (as his horses had been in earlier days) after the objects which were most deeply interesting to him at the time. One wood went by the name of "the Niger," another by that of "Fernando Po," and so on.

To Andrew Johnston, Esq.

"Northrepps Hall, Feb. 10. 1843.

"Our party here, although very small, and with a touch of the lonely, is very cheerful and comfortable.

"At least ninety families have been supported during this hard weather by double trenching my plantations, and earning, I am happy to say, on the average two shillings a day. But this last snow has beat them, and they can do no more at present. I am getting decidedly stronger, and feel more like myself.

"Feb. 12. — All Earlham came here yesterday to dinner. I have been riding with a large party, to see my new plantations; and we are all greatly delighted. Love to all. In truth I can say from my heart, 'The good Lord bless you all.'"

One of his friends observing to him, "Your plantations will some day be the pride of the country if England stands." "England stand!" said he. "I will never believe that any country will fall which has abolished slavery as England has done."

The following recollections of Sir Fowell during the latter years of his life are from the pen of his secretary Mr. Nixon, and may aid the reader in forming a just idea of his character: —

"The qualities which struck me most in Sir Fowell Buxton

* "Brief Memoir of Sir T. Fowell Buxton, Bart.," p. 27.

were his perseverance, benevolence, disregard of outside appearances, his entire devotion to what was practical, and, perhaps beyond all, his *humility*.

"As regards perseverance: before entering upon an undertaking, he seemed to consider, not whether success in it were *probable*, but whether it were *possible*; if so, he would set about it at once, and never give in till that success was gained.

"His humility led him to esteem no one unworthy of a certain portion of respect, however low his condition; so that I never in any instance saw the principle of that Essay by Dr. Channing, which has for its title 'honour due unto all men,' so fully and consistently carried out as by him.

"In June, 1840, a few days after I became his secretary, he went to town from Upton, leaving me the task of making an epitome of his 'Slave Trade and Remedy.' When he returned we walked up and down the lawn, I reading my paper to him. He listened very attentively, and when it was finished he tapped me on the shoulder and said, 'Very well done indeed, Mr. Nixon; it does you great credit, but it won't do for me. It would make a capital flowery speech for a young member of Parliament; but I want something more practical, *very brief and very strong*: so now come along indoors, and let us make a beginning.'

"I never recall the period of my connection with Sir Fowell without a feeling of astonishment at his wonderful powers of concentration, which enabled him to apply every atom of his energies to the one purpose in hand. In carrying out a great object he was borne along irresistibly, and to compass it every effort *must* be made which human ingenuity could point out, or bodily endurance admit of. He used to become far too deeply absorbed to be conscious of fatigue, and would often laugh at me good humouredly when I complained that I felt very tired, and should like to give up for awhile. 'Tired, Nixon! why, you don't know what it is to be tired. When you've had nineteen years in Parliament you'll be able to form some opinion of what it means: however, we must finish this job at any rate. I don't care how many white slaves I make to save the black ones!'

"When he returned alone from Italy, at which time I became his secretary, he was overwhelmed with business connected

with the Niger Expedition. These affairs were so widely ramified that none but a powerful mind could have sustained such constant and heavy pressure. When the day's labour was over, he was frequently quite unable to sleep, and night after night I was called upon to read aloud to him, in the hope of soothing him to rest. Many a time when I was at length dropping off into a lower and lower tone, believing that his slumbers had begun, he would stop me suddenly, exclaiming, 'Get me my memorandum book, Mr. Nixon; set down so and so,' and he would go on until there was work enough set down for the next week perhaps. Then came another monotonous page or two of the book I was reading, and then up he would get, saying, 'It's of no use, I can't sleep: come into the drawing-room — now then, take a sheet of paper;' he would then dictate three or four notes or a letter, or a portion of some long statement upon which he might be engaged, and then go to bed again.

"His perseverance in small things as well as in great was displayed in the labour he bestowed on his plantations, which had been formed upon the roughest ground, and were exposed to those bitter north-east blasts which seemed to preclude all hope of covering the hills with wood. But he spared no pains to accomplish his purpose: reading, correspondence, conversation with men of experience, visits to nursery-grounds and woods — every method was resorted to for obtaining information and securing success: and it was attained abundantly. Indeed the flourishing plantations at Trimingham and Runton are brought forward as the example of successful planting, in the essay on that subject which gained the gold medal of the Royal Agricultural Society in 1845.

"The rule of Sir Fowell's life was to be 'complete in all things,' and to do well what he did at all: but I ought to observe, that in forming his plantations he evidently derived the greatest part of his pleasure from the employment it gave to the poor.

"His delight in horses was remarkable. I may relate an anecdote which he told me himself, in connection with one of his favourites. 'Poor old Abraham,' he said, 'was the finest horse I ever had in my life.' At the time when George IV. was very unpopular, I was riding through St. James's Park,

just as the king passed, surrounded by an immense mob. The shouts and groans and yellings were terrific, and there was I wedged in among the multitude, in the midst of noises which might have frightened the most courageous animal. But my noble-spirited horse pricked up his ears, distended his nostrils, curved his neck, and stood immoveable. The next day came the Marquis of —— to endeavour to buy my horse. I said I did not wish to sell him, that he was a great favourite of mine, and perfectly suited my purpose. Nothing daunted, the Marquis held his ground, made me first one offer and then another, and at last told me that he was not endeavouring to buy the horse for himself, but was authorised to go as far as 500*l* for a friend. This offer I still refused, when, as a last resource, "The fact is, Mr. Buxton," said he, "it is the king who has sent me to buy your horse, and I hope you will not refuse to sell him to his majesty." This took me rather aback, but I had made up my mind; so, with very many apologies and regrets, and in the politest manner imaginable, I maintained my ground, and thus the matter ended. What I meant, though I didn't think it exactly civil to say so, was, "You may tell His Majesty that I'm happy to hear he's so fond of a good horse; but so am I; and having got one, I mean to keep him!"'

"His generosity was unbounded. I remember, when we were at Bath, his chief pleasure was to look into the shops, and see what he could buy for his family, his grandchildren, or his friends. His manner, too, of making a present was the most agreeable and delicate imaginable. In looking over things, he would sometimes say, 'Well, I don't know which to choose; which do *you* think is the best, Nixon?' And on my pointing out which I thought the most desirable article, he would say, 'Oh! you think so, do you, Sir? well then put that on one side for Mr. Nixon!'

"His public liberality, which is so generally known, was only equalled by his private acts of generosity and charity — acts which were known only to myself and the recipients of his bounty. He appeared totally *unable* to deny relief, where it seemed to be required, although he might feel it had not been merited. Sometimes, when he had relieved the same person several times, he would give me directions to write a rather

sharp note, stating that he could attend to no further applications. In the course of the day he would ask me whether I had sent the note. He would then hesitate, read over the applicant's letter once again, and then, leaning back in his arm-chair and raising his spectacles upon his forehead, would look me steadily in the face. 'What do you think of it, Nixon? The poor old *villain* seems to be in a bad way, shall I send him a trifle more?' On my declining to give an opinion, he would continue, 'Well, then, send him another sovereign; and as this is the *seventh* time he has promised never to apply to me again, tell him that I give him a trifle *this once*, but only on condition that I am never to see his handwriting any more. I don't wish to hurt the poor old fellow's feelings, but explain to him, in the very civillest terms imaginable, that I'll see his neck stretched before I send him another halfpenny.' Then rising to go out of the room, he would look back before shutting the door, to beg of me 'not to put it *too sharp*,' and to let him see the letter before sending it off. Such was the man — he could not bear to give a moment's pain.

"I hardly ever saw such affection towards little children as his was. Though engaged in the most difficult business, he could hardly make up his mind to turn them out, when they came to him in the study, without a present of sweetmeats or cakes, which he used often to hoard up for them; and if he happened to hear a child cry in the far-off regions of the nursery, he used to jump up, leaving, in the midst, the most important letter or paper, and could never rest till he had gained relief from this to him painful occurrence.

"It would sometimes happen that a little cause of dispute arose between us, generally some difference of opinion; and I, unfortunately, could seldom restrain myself from saying precisely what, at the moment, I felt. This used to vex him; but he would say nothing till the next day, and then, when I thought that the whole matter had passed off (having perhaps received great kindness in the mean time) he would all at once say, 'What a silly fellow you were, Nixon, to put yourself in such a passion yesterday! If I had spoken then, we should most probably have parted. Make it a rule never to speak when you are in a passion, but wait till the next day.'

"If, at any time, he happened to transgress this rule himself,

he was seriously vexed and grieved, and could not rest till he had in some way made amends for his want of self-restraint Most men consider it not very necessary, perhaps degrading, to make an apology to those below them in station; but such was not his case. The plan of people in general, is tacitly to acknowledge their error by an increase of kindness, if they do not actually presume upon their authority, and make 'might' stand for 'right;' but such was not his mode of action.

"I recollect one instance well. He was going to shoot at Runton (I think it was in 1844), and just before he was to start I had been urging some point upon him, which I knew to be necessary, but perhaps I did so with too great vehemence, and not enough respect. At this time the carriage was announced, and he left the room saying, 'I tell you what, Nixon, I don't wish you to come out shooting with me, and had much rather you would not!' I was sure, however, that he did not actually mean this; so, after a minute's reflection, I mounted the pony and rode after him. When near the Felbrigg Lodges I saw the coachman pull up, and, after speaking to Sir Fowell, beckon to me. As soon as I reached the side of the carriage, he put his hand out of the window, saying, 'Come, Nixon, I know I was wrong; you must not think anything more of what I said just now!'

"I do not put forward these few recollections of Sir Fowell as *anecdotes*, but merely as rough memoranda; and I am only sorry that I have been able to record so few. In conclusion, I may say that it has given me sincere pleasure thus to review the period of my fortunate connection with him; and that my reverence and esteem for him are, if possible, increased every time that I am led to reflect upon his character."

CHAPTER XXXIII.

1843, 1844.

BATH. — SUMMER AT NORTHREPPS. — CONTINUED AND INCREASING ILLNESS. — CORRESPONDENCE WITH SIR ROBERT PEEL AND THE BISHOP OF CALCUTTA.

In the spring of 1843 Sir Fowell Buxton was recommended to try the Bath waters. In a letter from thence to Mr. Johnston, after alluding to the poor state of his health, he says:—

"Bath, March 3. 1843.

"* * * Now for something better. To use David's words, 'My mouth hath been filled with laughter' since I read in the Globe, which arrived yesterday, the account of Brougham asking a question about the slave trade, and of Lord Aberdeen replying, 'that he was convinced the time would soon come when it would be abolished altogether.'

"Pray turn to it, and let P. taste the delight of hearing that debate, and of seeing that, although our good Lord did not think proper to execute *our* plan, it seems every way probable that He is preparing to accomplish the work, which is all that signifies, and all that I care for. If He do but undertake the task, we know that all obstacles are removed, and all difficulties surmounted. It puts me into the greatest gaiety of heart."

To Miss Gurney.

"Bath, May 19. 1843.

"* * * As to myself, if I am to tell the truth, I do not feel strong; and partly from frequent attacks of illness and feebleness, and partly from the manner in which my doctor shook his head, I catch myself saying, in the language of Christopher North, 'Though our day be not quite gone by, we

think we see the stealing shades of evening, and, in the solemn vista, the darkness of night.'

"I called at the Colonial Office when I was in London; James Stephen spoke in such glowing terms of the conduct of the negroes since Emancipation, as sent me home quite exulting."

In writing to Mr. Scoble, explaining his absence from the Anti-Slavery convention, he adds, "I can no longer personally unite with you in fighting; but my prayer to God is, that he would stand by all those who are engaged in the holy attempt to put down these iniquities."

He would occasionally express an earnest desire that he might be enabled to work again in the service of Africa; "but," he observed on one occasion, "no matter who is the instrument, so that there be successful labourers for God, for Christ, and for man, especially for heathen man!"

The summer of the year was passed very quietly at Northrepps. His extremely feeble health precluding him from exertion, he amused himself with the improvement of his farm and plantations; while, in the evenings, he delighted to come out upon the lawn, and watch the villagers at their games of cricket. While the force of his mind was waning, his affections seemed to cling with ever-increasing warmth to all who were dear to him. It would be impossible to describe the energy of his prayers while imploring every "good and perfect gift" for those whom he loved, both present and far away; but, above all, morning and evening, did his most fervent supplications ascend, that his heavenly Father would stretch forth his hand to deliver "poor Africa."

To Mrs. Johnston, Halesworth.

"August, 1843.

"We have just finished our family reading, and therefore I trust I shall stand acquitted, even in Andrew's eyes, of violating the Sabbath, if I spend a few moments with almost the dearest friend I have. Your image has been present with me all the day. I fear too that you are still in suffering. I look about me, thinking what there is that we could do that might add to your comfort. I cannot think how it was that I was so stubborn about that portrait of myself. 'May you have it?' To be sure you may, and I only wish it were ten times more worth your having. I will send it by the van forthwith. * * * '

To Archdeacon Trew, on entering on his office in the Bahamas.

"October, 1843.

"There is this comfort in your leaving England, that you are embarked in a noble cause, and if you succeed in obtaining black men, who are truly converted and spiritual Christians, to labour in Africa, it will be worth, not only any inconvenience to which you may be exposed, but the lives of any ten of us. So go in good heart, my dear friend, and the Lord go along with you."

He was sufficiently recovered in the autumn to receive a few guests under his roof; amongst them the Rev. Samuel Crowther, who, during his visit, preached in Northrepps church; and Sir Fowell was not a little gratified at hearing an excellent sermon from the lips of a negro clergyman. In his sermon Mr. Crowther alluded to the failure of the Niger Expedition; but, after describing some of its results in opening communication between Sierra Leone and other parts of Africa, and affording great facilities for missionary enterprise, he declared that it had already produced important good, and that "some of those who had sown weeping would yet bring in their sheaves rejoicing; for what

greater joy can there be for them, than to hear that their children are walking in the truth?"

In the same tone Mr. Beecham writes, on sending Sir Fowell the Rev. Mr. Freeman's narrative of his third journey in Western Africa:—

"You live to see that the Niger Expedition has not been a total failure. It has not worked out its beneficial results exactly in the way which was anticipated; but Almighty God is making it accomplish, in his own way, the good on which your benevolent heart was set. The Niger Expedition has given a new impulse to the African mind, and induced the emigration from Sierra Leone, which has opened the way into Yariba and Dahomey, and placed even Central Africa within our reach."*

Towards the end of November, Sir Fowell's family were alarmed by a great increase of bodily weakness, accompanied by a loss of memory, and at times a confusion of ideas most distressing to those about him. Oppression on the brain no doubt existed, and for several weeks he was very seriously ill; but, at the end of that time, he was again restored in a surprising manner to his usual measure of bodily strength, and to perfect clearness of mind, although he was never able afterwards to bear exertion, either physical or mental.

During his illness a few notes were taken, from which some extracts may be made:—

"Nov. 29. On some failure of memory, he said, 'Well, I should be willing to forget, if the Lord do but forget my sins.' Several texts being quoted, one of which contained a promise of forgiveness, 'Yes!' he replied, with deep feeling and seriousness, 'if it is not presumption on my part to say so, through

* Every year has shown more clearly that the Niger Expedition was in fact of vast moment, in opening the way for missionaries; who have already, especially at Abbeokuta, produced an extraordinary change in the condition, physical and moral, of some of the native tribes.

unspeakable and condescending mercy, I believe I have acceptance with God—that I have peace with God through Jesus Christ.'

"Dec. 3. On receiving an account of Mrs. Fry's illness, he immediately exclaimed, with deep earnestness, 'O Lord, I beseech thee to restore this most beloved sister, so that she may be permitted to return to her important career, and that her ears may again be attentive to the cry of the miserable of the earth.' He then went on in a strain of confession and humiliation before God: 'O Lord, I beseech thee, forgive thy unworthy servant his innumerable sins and transgressions against thee;' adding, 'If it be not presumptuous to say it, in Christ I find acceptance and peace;' and afterwards he prayed earnestly 'for an uncompromising submission to the will of God.'"

At this time the failure of his memory and his general feebleness seemed to be increasing: he frequently put his hands up to his head, as if it were in pain; fetching deep sighs and groans, and tottering even in walking across the room. But his mind, though failing in power, was illumined by the sweetest glow of love to God and man.

"Some one expressing sympathy with his suffering, he replied, 'Oh! it is the gracious act of our most merciful Father; let us most peacefully acquiesce.' He remarked to his son that he thought himself worse, and that he strongly suspected that his right hand and arm were benumbed. His son tried to turn it off, observing, among other things, 'I am persuaded you need not be afraid.' 'Oh no,' replied he, with great emphasis, 'I am not afraid. Whether for life or death, I am not afraid. I hope it is not presumptuous; I *have* a confidence.'

"Dec. 24. He was very restless at night. He could not recall the name of the remedy he felt in need of. On its being discovered, he said most feelingly, 'Thanks be to the great and good God for making me submissive.' Sympathy being expressed with him in being debarred from his usual occupations, his answer was, 'I can say I do *not* feel it painful. There is not a feeling in my whole soul or body either, I believe, that

rebels against any visitation of God:' and again, 'No quarrelling or grumbling upon this.' His own trials made him feel most acutely for those of others: being asked one night why he was sighing so heavily, he replied, 'For the suffering that is in the world.' Thanksgivings, however, were perpetually on his lips. On one occasion he exclaimed with great fervour, 'O Lord, with my whole soul I thank thee, that, instead of ease, and prosperity, and the best things of this world, thou hast sent this illness.' And afterwards he earnestly prayed that the insight granted him into heavenly things might never be obscured or fade from his view, but that he might ever pant after them, and give his whole soul, and heart, and strength to the Lord who had had mercy upon him.

"His benevolent exertions having been alluded to, he said, 'It is all the goodness of the Lord. Oh! that I may be but admitted into the lowest place in Heaven!'

"After reading the Lord's Prayer, he said that he felt it very awful to ask that forgiveness to us should be in any sort of proportion to that we ourselves exercise to others; not that he had anything to forgive, but that his sense of the need of forgiveness was such that he could not bear any restriction upon it."

Early in January, 1844, his health began to improve, and he then rose for a time out of the fearful state of debility into which he had fallen.

Soon after his recovery he was greatly pleased by two letters, the one from Mr. Anson, addressed to him by direction of H. R. H. Prince Albert, and the other from Sir Edward Parry, informing him that increased efforts were contemplated by the Government for the suppression of the slave trade, by augmenting the squadron on the coast of Africa. At the same time he heard that the Government evinced a determination not to admit slave-grown sugar. "Surely," he writes, "these are causes of unspeakable thankfulness."

To Sir Robert Peel, Bart.

"Sir, "Spitalfields, April 17. 1844.

"As some persons have, I believe, addressed the Government on the subject of the Sugar Duties, and as many are taking measures for making their views known to the public, I hope I do not appear to you to be putting myself too forward by troubling you with my opinions on the same matter.

"I feel most strongly, that to allow Cuba and Brazil to send their slave-grown sugars to Great Britain, with any serious diminution of restrictive duties, would be to undo in great measure the work in which this country has, so much to her own honour, been for so long a period, and at such heavy sacrifices, engaged.

"The impulse which would thus be given to the growth of sugar in Cuba and Brazil could not fail to be very great. An immense addition to the number of labourers would necessarily be required, and it is too late to entertain a doubt as to the horrid cruelties and crimes which must be perpetrated in order to obtain that supply of labour.

"But it is not merely the cause of humanity which would thus suffer: the character of our nation would receive an indelible stain. It has been our pride to furnish encouragement and energy to the friends of freedom; and now, supposing us to yield to the entreaties of those who are interested in slavery and the slave trade, we shall stand forth as the revivers and reanimaters of those monstrous iniquities. We shall employ one fleet on the coast of Africa to suppress the trade; while another, under the British flag, and supported by British capital, will be sailing from Cuba and Brazil to supply the British market with sugar, which can only be produced by that new slave trade which we shall thus call into existence.

"I assure you that I have felt deep gratitude to yourself and your colleagues for your steadfast refusal to admit slave-grown sugar; and I am not altogether unable to estimate the strenuous resolution which it must have required, in order to enable her Majesty's Ministers to resist the entreaties of some, the threats of others, and the plausible appeals of those who have made the

distresses of our own people the ground on which to base their interested applications.

"I need not trouble you, Sir Robert, with any argument to show that this infamous traffic is a compound and an accumulation of all crimes, or that it merits (looking at the present calamities it inflicts, and the innumerable and heavy evils which result from it), more than any other great iniquity, to be visited with the vengeance of the law; nor can I conclude this letter without remarking how sincerely I have rejoiced in the vigorous policy of the Government, as evinced by their sending out so many additional cruisers and steam-vessels to the coast of Africa, to co-operate with the squadron before stationed there, in a yet more determined effort to give the final blow to the iniquitous occupation of the slave dealer.

"I have the honour to be, &c. &c.,

"T. FOWELL BUXTON."

The Right Hon. Sir Robert Peel, Bart., to Sir Fowell Buxton.

"Dear Sir, "Whitehall, April 18. 1844.

"It is gratifying to me to receive from you, the untiring and disinterested friend of humanity and of the African race, the assurances which your letter of yesterday conveys.

"In the present temper and with the present views of the ruling authorities in Brazil and Cuba, I cannot doubt that the opening of the market of this country to Brazilian and Cuban sugar, at greatly reduced duties, would give an encouragement to its production by slave labour, to which there would be no check, either from the influence of humane and moral feelings, from municipal law, or from international obligations. The state of things in Cuba, since the removal of General Valdez from the Government, is most unsatisfactory.

"This is a critical period in the annals of slavery and the slave trade; and the example of England, if she were now to relax her honourable exertions in that cause, of which she is in truth the only active and zealous supporter, would have a very extensive and very evil influence.

"If the exertion of force will avail for the suppression of the slave trade, I cannot conceive a use of force more justifiable, in

the eyes of God than the employment of it in the defeat and punishment of an infamous traffic. If it will not avail, though justifiable, it would be of course impolitic: but the experience of a few months on the coasts of Africa and Brazil, were every British cruiser withdrawn, would, I fear, demonstrate the inefficacy of any other means at present for the suppression of the slave trade.

"I have the honour to be, &c. &c.,

"ROBERT PEEL."

In the spring Sir Fowell Buxton went to Bath, where a letter from the Bishop of Calcutta reached him, dated February 15. 1844:—

"I must write to you now and then, my dearest friend," says the Bishop, "because I look on you as much depressed with the events which have occurred in Africa, and as also in but an indifferent state of health. Such is God's holy will, who disposes health and sickness as he pleases, and success also, or disappointment, in our most lawful projects. Grace is thus strengthened in all its mightiest principles in our heart — silence, submission, contrition, trust in Christ, hope of the peace of Heaven. And though the Niger Expedition seems for the time to have failed, yet how magnificent is the result of the experiment on man in the West Indies, and the demonstration that his noble powers, when allowed to come into play, can beat out and out the tardy product of the whip and chain! In India things are moving on; but the field is so vast that the effects of what has been accomplished are scarcely visible. In the three dioceses there are altogether about 250 chaplains and missionaries, most of them men of God, and labouring to their power and beyond their power for the spiritual and temporal welfare of our teeming population. If God should send us a wise, calm, enlightened, amiable, firm, pious Governor-General, it is incalculable what good might be done, and that in a short time.

"And the great Arbiter is prospering our arms, and thus extending our influence. Central India is settled, Affghanistan is settled, Scinde is settled (though thinking people don't like it), China is settled; nothing remains disquieted but the Punjaub. But what times are we fallen upon at home! Well, God is

above; Christ intercedes; the Gospel is being diffused wider and wider; the Holy Ghost is the inward advocate; the Bible, without note or comment or the fathers, continues the inspired rule of faith and practice; and the various branches of the Universal Church are administering the word and sacraments; whilst heaven is the blessed haven whither we are bound! Farewell, my dearest Sir Fowell and Lady Buxton, and Mrs. Fry. May God preserve us all to his eternal kingdom!"

To the Bishop of Calcutta.

"My very dear Friend, "Bath, May 1. 1844.

"Your comforting delightful letter, of the 15th of February, has just reached me, and has been a real pleasure to us all. It is wonderful that, with all Asia on your hands, you have any sympathies left for poor Africa. I can truly say, your pity for her is most grateful to me, and may it be returned abundantly to you and your more immediate objects of interest!

"I am not now so much cast down with regard to Africa as you may suppose; the bitterness of disappointment as to the Niger Expedition, and the deep mourning for precious lives lost, are in some measure abated; and I have settled in my mind that the expedition was but one experiment upon a great principle: the experiment has failed from no error as to facts or mistake in the principles on which we relied; but from a cause at which we always looked, *and confessed we looked*, with exceeding dread. I can well believe the failure of that great attempt was a right humiliation and check for us. But I more and more see cause to trust that the putting forth of those facts, and of that great principle that the extinction of the slave trade must come from Africa herself—from the operation of the Bible and the plough in Africa—has borne and is bearing fruit. The seed is sown in many hearts—above all, in many hearts that throb under black skins.

"As soon almost as a negro is truly converted and educated, he begins to sigh for Africa. Sierra Leone, over whose days of darkness poor Wilberforce and Macaulay had to groan so heavily, is beginning to show its harvest by the return of *Christian*, civilised, and, by comparison, wealthy negroes, to the various countries from which they were carried away as slaves. All the

societies are more or less awakened towards Africa, and the Church has lately ordained two black clergymen.

"Our valuable friend Trew is gone as Archdeacon to the Bahamas, and I think his favourite work will be to train spiritual labourers for Africa. So you see, though we decay, the work lives.

"I have, indeed, been very ill, and obliged to lead much the life of an invalid; but I am surrounded with blessings, and am, I trust, most truly thankful for leisure and repose. My family are favoured too; my dearest and most invaluable wife in better health than she was a few years ago, my two elder children surrounded with sweet young families, my younger daughter our comfort at home, and my two younger sons just entering life. We have one heavy family cloud — the illness, long-continued and grievously painful, of our beloved sister Mrs. Fry. She has been for some months unable to walk or stand, and is deeply afflicted in body; but her faith and hope are preserved in strength, and her reliance on the Saviour is unbounded.

"Joseph J. Gurney is on a missionary excursion in France; all the rest of our families are in their usual health; the Cunninghams rejoicing and labouring as usual.

"I thank you much, my dear friend, for all you say; and can from my heart re-echo your desire, that God may preserve us all to his eternal kingdom.

"Yours ever, in true fidelity,

"T. FOWELL BUXTON.

"I am far more of a Quaker than you are as to these Indian wars. I know every one of them may be called defensive, but the principles and root of all are aggression and conquest. I cannot conceive how our missions are ever to prevail against the arguments of our cannon. Six thousand heathen slain at Gwalior are a terrible set-off against our converts. Yet we are not to be discouraged. I long for the whole Christian world to combine its forces against war. Peace seems to me an object not nearly enough striven for, as lying at the root of all other good.

"One would suppose by my silence that I think nothing of the abolition of slavery in the East Indies. This is very far from being the truth. We do rejoice most truly at what has been done. We know there cannot be the abolition of slavery,

however narrow and jejune may be its details, without a flight of concomitant blessings. But we want to know each and every detail, and we hope you will write without delay, and tell us all about it."

Mrs. Fry was at this time staying also at Bath, and in Sir Fowell's blank memorandum book of 1844 there is this entry, under the date of May 25.:—

"I visited E. Fry this evening, and found her in tears, and in a very low state. I reminded her of the promises of God, and of the merits of Christ, whereby she and such as she are assured of the 'inheritance incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away;' soon she was cheerful and full of smiles; and when I went away, and had left the room for that purpose, she sent for me back, and whispered in my ear, 'How precious is the love and sweet harmony which has always prevailed between us and amongst us! I trust, as we have loved one another in time, so we may abound in love towards each other for all eternity. How delightful is the thought of eternal love binding us together!'"

A branch society for the civilisation of Africa had been formed by the Africans at Sierra Leone, and had sent a considerable sum of money to the parent society in England. To their committee Sir Fowell addressed the following letter:—

"Gentlemen, "Spitalfields, June 7. 1844.

"I cannot refrain from expressing the very great pleasure which the intelligence of your proceedings has caused in England, among persons so long and so deeply interested in the welfare of the oppressed inhabitants of uncivilised Africa.

It is a matter for great thankfulness to find such exertions for the liberation of the slaves going on in any community, but especially so when set on foot by the very men who have themselves been victims of the most terrible system of cruelty and oppression which the world has ever known. You have, moreover, the credit of setting the example to your fellow-countrymen of what may be done by themselves towards the elevation

of their species, and their own liberation from the dreadful evils to which they have been so long subject.

"Be assured that the spirit which this gift evinces on your part, and the anxiety which it displays for the spread of human freedom in the world, for the advancement of education, and still more for the diffusion of the Gospel of Christ among the benighted millions of your country, will not fail to afford the deepest gratification to those who, for twenty years, have not ceased in their exertions or in their prayers for your real and everlasting welfare."

CHAPTER XXXIV.

1844, 1845.

SUMMER AT NORTHREPPS.—ANXIETY RESPECTING SIERRA LEONE.—MR. FREEMAN.—RELIGIOUS FEELINGS.—MARRIAGE OF HIS SON.—INCREASING ILLNESS.—HIS DEATH AND INTERMENT.

ALTHOUGH in a languid, feeble state of health, he again spent a tolerably cheerful summer at Northrepps. His spirits were less depressed, which he said was owing to a greater assurance of being a partaker of the heavenly inheritance. "This is granted me," he said, "through the *royal* love and mercy of my Lord, who has died for me."

In the fine summer mornings he would often rise at four or five o'clock, and go into his dressing-room, where his voice could be heard for an hour or two at a time in fervent prayer. When remonstrated with on the risk to his health, he would answer, "I have not time enough for prayer. I must have longer time for prayer." "How could I be shorter?" he replied on one occasion; "I could not stop." One night, his voice being heard after he was in bed, he was asked what he was saying. "Praying hard," was his reply; adding, "I have been praying *vehemently* for myself, that I may receive faith, that I may receive the grace of God in my heart, that I may have a clear vision of Christ, that I may perfectly obey Him, that I may have the supporting arm of the Lord in every trial, and be admitted finally into His glorious kingdom." After a

badnight, on his wife expressing her sorrow at his lying so long awake, "Oh, do not be sorry," he replied; "I have had such heavenly thoughts."

In the autumn, although he was still able to take a little air and exercise, going out on his pony with his gun, or to visit his plantations, his appearance indicated increased languor and oppression; and he was, to use his own words, "under decayed spirits." Though very unfit for any mental labour, he was stirred up to exertion by hearing that important changes were about to be made by Government in the arrangements for the liberated Africans at Sierra Leone, by obliging them to go at once to the West Indies. He greatly feared anything approaching to compulsory emigration, and warmly objected to the breaking up in any degree of that system of education and training at Sierra Leone, which appeared to him, through the blessing of God, just beginning to produce results of extreme importance to the whole continent of Africa.

He therefore wrote a long and urgent appeal to Lord Stanley, adducing every argument to persuade him to give up the scheme. The composition of this letter cost him a grievous effort. He was intensely anxious to accomplish it, thinking that it might have weight with the Government, and induce them to relinquish what appeared to him so injurious a measure. He would not give it up, but went on making attempt after attempt to finish it; often did he begin to dictate, and then sink back exhausted in the middle of a sentence; then he would rouse himself and try again, till at last it was completed. It is too long for insertion here; but it scarcely displays any trace of the extreme debility under which he was labouring. With this act closed his long and arduous exertions on behalf of the Negro race.

The able and successful African missionary, Mr. Freeman, who had recently returned from an adventurous journey into the kingdoms of Dahomey and Yariba, came to Northrepps, at the end of October, accompanied by Mr. Beecham.

Remembering with what lively interest Sir Fowell had received Mr. Freeman's journals of his two previous visits to Coomassie, which the Wesleyan Missionary Society had sent him as soon as they could get a copy taken, his inability on this occasion to receive the gratification which his friends had hoped to afford him was very painful. He was, in fact, quite unable to enter into the details, which heretofore would have given him so much pleasure. All the incidents of the journey, although related by Mr. Freeman in the most animated manner, could not rouse him to make questions or remarks. His family could not but feel that evening that the blow was struck; and, indeed, the solemn gravity of his own manner showed that he himself knew it to be so.

He continued too feeble and too much oppressed to converse much; but every now and then the deep feelings of his heart would break forth. When saying grace before dinner, he seemed unable to restrain his overflowing love to the Provider of all mercies.

Some of his expressions have been preserved, as the following: —

"We thank thee, O Lord, for all thy supplies to us, and we pray thee to inspire us with deep gratitude to the Author of every good gift."

"Lord, make us truly thankful for thy innumerable mercies to us; and with the blessings of the body give us those far greater blessings to the soul, which are by Christ Jesus."

"The Lord bless us with a sense of His mercy, of His love,

and His indulgent kindness to us, and give us an anxious desire to serve Him, and to please Him for Christ's sake."

"The Lord make us very thankful, and recall to our recollection all the instances of His mercy, and fill us with thankfulness."

One morning, the 11th chapter of Matthew having been read aloud, Sir Fowell, who, in his easy chair by the fireside, had been an attentive listener, said, "There is one passage which you have not touched upon, but which I never can read without the most anxious inquiry into the state of my own soul." He then read the verses beginning, "Woe unto thee, Chorazin," &c., and dwelt on his many and great privileges, concluding by solemnly observing, "How great will be our condemnation, if these be not improved!"

On Sunday, the 17th of November, he went to church; and, according to his custom, gave out the hymns to be sung during the service. One of them was that beautiful hymn, beginning, "All hail the power of Jesu's name!" In reading the last verse, which runs thus —

> "Oh! that with yonder sacred throng
> We at his feet may fall;
> There join the everlasting song,
> And crown him Lord of all!"—

so fervant was his emphasis, and so marked the expression of his uplifted countenance, that, on returning home, the Rev. P. C. Law noticed it to his family, and said he felt a strong conviction that he should never again hear Sir Fowell's voice in that church. The presentiment was verified.

Early in December his second son was engaged to be married to the fifth daughter of Mr. Samuel Gurney. On this occasion he wrote with great effort the following note, the last ever written by his own hand.

To Mrs. S. Gurney.

"My dear Elizabeth, "Northrepps, Dec. 3. 1844.

"I lose no time in answering the letter just received from my son Fowell. In that letter there is a question from you; viz. 'Do I heartily like and approve his marriage with your daughter R——?' My answer is clear and firm. I do from my heart approve, like, and rejoice in the connection, and from my heart return thanks to that great and indulgent Being who has prompted so admirable a selection. May they live long and happily together; may great peace and prosperity attend them; and may they be 'the beloved of their good and gracious Master.'

"With the most sincere love and affection for your husband and all the branches from that old stem,

"Believe me, my very dear sister,

"Yours most lovingly,

"T. Fowell Buxton."

On the 5th of December, while sitting in his chair in his dressing-room, he poured out his heart in prayer, that he, unworthy as he was, might, without a single doubt, know the blessed Lord to be the Saviour; that he might dwell in Christ, and Christ, through infinite mercy, in him, filling his heart with charity, love, meekness, and every grace; that his numerous trangressions might be pardoned; and that, finally, he might be gathered into the land of everlasting life.

Soon afterwards he said, "I feel my faculties and powers obscured;" but added, "my faith is strong." On the 15th of December he was seized with a severe spasm on the chest, the effects of which, in the course of a week or two, became extremely alarming to his family, and they all collected around him.

While reduced to the lowest state of weakness he was full of the spirit of gratitude, and continually poured forth fervent thanksgiving "for pardon given and re-

deeming love." His prayers were earnest for "the gift of the most Holy Spirit and the removal of all clouds, that he might come to Christ, under humiliation, suffering, and infirmity; and find strength and consolation in Him."

On Sunday, January 21., he broke forth with much energy of voice and manner in these words; "O God, O God, *can* it be that there is good reason to believe that such an one as I shall be numbered among the just? is thy mercy able to contain even me? From my very heart I give thee most earnest thanksgivings for this and for all thy mercies."

Towards the end of January, on experiencing some return of strength, he remarked, "How pleasant is the feeling of rest on recovery from illness, while all our worldly occupations are laid aside!" and when some one observed to him that it seemed like a foretaste of the heavenly rest prepared for the children of God, he immediately broke forth into prayer for each member of his family, that they might be partakers of that blessed rest through Christ our Lord. The varied expressions of tenderness for those most dear to him, which were blended with these prayers, were singularly impressive. He continued to take a lively interest in everything connected with his poorer neighbours: indeed his own needs seemed to open his heart more than ever to the wants of others; so that it was necessary to avoid mentioning cases of sorrow or suffering, from the pain it occasioned him. He was most anxious that the villagers should be supplied with soup and other comforts; and never did his countenance brighten up with more satisfaction than when he caught a view, from his bed, of the train of women and children walking home over the grass, with their steaming cans and pitchers.

The most cordial welcome was ready for every one who visited him; and his expressions of love continually turned into earnest prayer for them and for all his friends, that they might be given to the Lord for life and for ever!

Owing probably to physical weakness, his mind was occasionally beset with doubts; but these painful feelings were but of brief duration, and were always succeeded by his accustomed firm and serene belief, his mind frequently dwelling on the infinite mercy and love of God, and he would exclaim, "Now all clouds are removed. What an inexpressible favour!"

On the 6th of February he had a painful return of oppression on his breath; but he bore it with entire patience and submission.

He was much pleased by the following note from Mrs. Fry, who was herself extremely ill.

"I must try to express a little of the love and sympathy I feel with and for thee. * * * How much we have been one in heart, and how much one in our objects! Although our callings may have been various, and thine more extensive than mine, we have partaken of the sweet unity of the Spirit in the Lord. May we, whilst here, whether called to do or to suffer, be each other's joy in the Lord! and when the end comes, through a Saviour's love and merits, may we behold our King in his beauty, and rejoice in His presence for ever!

"My love to you and your children and children's children is great and earnest; my desire and prayer is, that grace, mercy, and peace may rest upon you in time and to all eternity!"

At Sir Fowell's request Mr. Law came after service on the 9th of February, and administered the Sacrament to him and to all the party around his bed. At night he began talking, apparently in his sleep, of the conversion of the heathen, and of longing to be at work

for them, saying, "I am ready to undertake all the working part." After a time of great exhaustion he said, "Christ is *most merciful—most merciful* to me. I do put my trust in Him."

Mr. J. J. Gurney, who visited him about a week before his death, thus describes his state:—

"It was almost, if not entirely, a painless illness. Nothing could be more quiet and comfortable than the sick room, with an easy access to all who were nearly connected with him: no fear of disturbing him, who was sure to be either asleep, or, if awake, in an unruffled, cheerful, happy state of mind, giving us, from time to time, characteristic tokens of himself, with his well-known arch manner, and with undeviating kindness and good temper to all around him, and no fretfulness or irritation. Never was a Christian believer more evidently rooted and grounded in his Saviour—never was the Christian's hope more evidently an *anchor* to the soul, sure and steadfast.

"On my remarking to him that I perceived he had a firm hold on Christ, he replied, in a clear emphatic manner, 'Yes, indeed, I have,—*unto eternal life.*' After a long-continued state of torpor, he revived surprisingly. Just before we left him, on the 14th of February, his mind was lively and bright, as 'a morning without clouds.'* While memory lasts, I can never forget his eager look of tenderness and affection, of love, joy, and peace, all combined, as he grasped my hand and kept firm hold of it for a long time, on my bidding him farewell, and saying to him, 'Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for thee; yes, for *thee*, my dearest brother.' The five days which intervened between our leaving him and his death appear to have been tranquil ones; with the same alternations between sleep long continued and tending to torpor, and waking times, brief indeed, but marked by an uncommon degree of ease and cheerfulness. F—— and his bride arrived in the course of them, and met a joyful and easy reception from their honoured father. C—— also returned from college, and was greeted with the warmest parental welcome."

* 2 Samuel, chap. xxiii. 4.

On the 19th of February he was very much exhausted, but tranquil in body and mind. Towards the afternoon symptoms of increasing oppression returned; and as the evening advanced, it was evident that he was entering the valley of the shadow of death. He sank into quiet sleep; his family collected round his bed, but no longer to be recognised by their honoured head; it was only to watch the peaceful departure of the spirit. He lay perfectly still; and, about a quarter before ten o'clock, fell asleep in his Lord.

"Never was death," says Mr. J. J. Gurney, "more still, and solemn, and gentle, than on this occasion. * * * The chamber where lay the remains of our departed brother, destined so soon to moulder, presented one of the fairest pictures that ever met my eye. Such an expression of intellectual power and refinement, of love to God and man, I think I have never seen before in any human countenance.

"He was buried in the ruined chancel of the little church at Overstrand. The old walls overrun with ivy, the building itself with the sea in full view, and the whole surrounding scenery, are highly picturesque.

"The funeral, which was conducted with great simplicity, took place on a mild sunny winter's morning, and was attended by a large train of relatives, friends, and neighbours. Long before the appointed hour, crowds of villagers were seen approaching the spot, through the lanes and fields, in every direction. All seemed deeply moved. They had lost their patron and friend, and were come to pay him the last tribute of respect and affection. The assembly was far too large to find room in the church, but great was the solemnity which prevailed in the churchyard while the interment took place. The whole scene was at once affecting and

significant; it seemed to speak in the language of David, 'Know ye not that there is a prince and a great man fallen this day in Israel?'—fallen, indeed, but only to rise again, and to afford one more consoling evidence that, for the humble believer in Jesus, death has lost its sting, and the grave its victory."*

* Brief Memoir, by Mr. J. J. Gurney.

A few weeks after the death of Sir Fowell Buxton some individuals who had admired his conduct and character formed themselves into a committee for erecting a testimonial to his memory.

The project was warmly approved. H. R. H. Prince Albert at once gave 50*l.* The other subscriptions were limited to 2*l.* 2*s.*, and in a short time a large list was formed, containing among others the names of many of the most distinguished men of the day, of both sides in politics, and of various denominations in religion. Even more gratifying than all this was the zeal with which the plan was taken up by the negroes in the West Indies, Sierra Leone, and Cape Coast, and by the natives in Kaffraria. Such was the multitude of these grateful subscribers that 450*l.* was quickly raised, chiefly in pence and halfpence. Altogether the number of contributors in the West Indies and Africa amounted to upwards of 50,000 persons. "The proposal," writes the Rev. W. H. Price from Tobago, "was received with lively interest." "The whole island has come forward," says Dr. Reddie, in a letter from St. Lucia. From Nevis the Rev. H. Chesborough writes, "Our negro people *willingly* came forward to testify their respect for the memory of Sir Fowell Buxton." The other letters are in the same strain. Nor was this all: — the liberated Africans and others in Sierra Leone had sent 100*l.* towards the monument in Westminster Abbey; but they wished, in addition to that, to have a monument among themselves; they therefore subscribed a further sum of 80*l.*, with which they have procured a

bust, beautifully executed by Mr. John Bell, which is shortly to be placed in St. George's Church, at Sierra Leone.

The testimonial, for which 1500*l.* has been subscribed, is a full length statue, executed by Mr. F. Thrupp, which is placed near the monument of William Wilberforce, in the north transept of Westminster Abbey.

This volume may be concluded with the following reminiscences of Sir Fowell Buxton, from the pen of his much valued friend, the Rev. J. W. Cunningham of Harrow.

"My dear Charles, "Harrow, Dec. 1847.

"I am delighted to hear that you are preparing a memoir of your dear and honoured father. Such a memoir appears to me to be indispensable. His numerous friends could not but long for details of a life of so much interest to themselves, and the public had a right to ask for all the private intelligence which could be collected as to the history of the extinction of slavery, and other holy and benevolent movements in which he acted so conspicuous a part.

"Having heard of your intention, I thought that you would forgive me, as one of his oldest and not least attached friends, if I ventured to give you my unbiassed impression of him. I should not, however, have thus presumed if I had not heard that you would be glad of any remarks founded on the observation of his character at an earlier period than that in which you had the privilege of ministering to his happiness.

"I shall be glad to say a few words as to his intellectual, religious, moral, and social qualities.

"As to the first, then, I have no hesitation in saying that I always regarded him as a person of the very clearest understanding and strongest common sense that I have ever known —of what we might, perhaps, call with justice, a truly fine specimen of the English mind. He had, amongst other evi-

dences of this quality of understanding, an unusual power of casting off all the superfluities of a question, and seizing upon its great cardinal points—of shutting out the side lights, and so of throwing a sort of direct and intense ray on the objects presented to him. One result of this was, that few men made such short speeches upon great subjects. For one fact or reason which he adduced, he rejected a hundred, as what he felt, and felt justly, to be mere encumbrances to his argument. Not one better understood the maxim, 'Ne quid nimis;' and here, I conceive, was one of the main causes of his success with the audience to which he was chiefly accustomed; an audience, I believe, beyond all others intolerant of superfluities of any kind. They did full honour to the orator, who had the singularity of sitting down before they expected him to do so.

"I may next say that I have seldom known a mind of such determined industry, patience, and undaunted resolution in the pursuit of any object which it might present to itself. I never went into his study without standing rebuked before the mountain of testimonies, authorities, and documents of all sorts and sizes, from all points of the compass, which he had accumulated on the questions to which his mind was especially directed. Others are apt now and then, in a favourable season, to lie on their oars and let the vessel drive; but the favouring wind only made him row the harder. I remember to have heard him expatiating to a Cabinet Minister on the many advantages of the 'Emancipation' bill. 'Yes,' it was replied, 'and, among others, the getting rid of your troublesome motions every three months.'

"In the next place, I consider him to have been a person of great natural eloquence. I do not mean that he ever reached the heights of some of the first 'worthies' of his day. He had not the wit and occasional majesty of Canning, or the exquisite grace and imagination of Wilberforce, or the adroitness and resistless vocabulary of Lord Brougham: but he had a touch of all these; and he had, to as great an extent as any one of his contemporaries, the faculty of clothing plain truths in strong language; of leaving no man for a moment in doubt of his meaning, and of driving home that meaning with power to the conscience and heart. I recollect a rhetorical lecturer at Oxford proposing his style in his work on Prison Discipline as a

model of pure English composition. And he spoke as he wrote, with almost unimpeachable correctness. The force of his language was not a little strengthened by occasional gaiety; and still oftener by a tone of manly indignation, which left the clearest conviction that he was thoroughly honest, intensely in earnest, and resolved that no one of his hearers should hereafter plead his ignorance of the subject as an apology for a bad vote upon it.

"I must now turn to the far more important subject of his religious character. And here I may first confidently say, that it would be most difficult to find any man with what I may call a more entire and profound reverence for the Word of God. That book was the leading star of his whole life. Some of his clerical friends, indeed, may have been tempted to think him a little too exclusive in this reverence when he ventured, as he sometimes did playfully, to characterise their long expositions of Scripture as 'Bible and water,' and earnestly pleaded, in the language of Bishop Sherlock, for 'long texts and short sermons.' But he so cordially loved the Bible himself, as to be intensely jealous of everything that was interposed between a dying soul and that which he deemed its life's blood. These days have more and more proved to us that even a scrupulous jealousy upon this point is not altogether superfluous.

"In the next place, your dear father felt, to as high a degree as any man I ever knew, the power and value of prayer. Let me venture to hope that you will not, from what I should be disposed to regard as false delicacy, exclude from the memoir any of the proofs of this devout frame of mind, which you may find among his papers. This was, I conceive, the true 'rock of his strength' in public and private life. I can remember his expressing much indignation at the sort of dilution of the divine promises, as to the efficacy of prayer, which is to be found in some theological works. His testimony upon the subject of prayer appears to me to be of the highest value, and especially to public men, who may learn from it that one of the most diligent and successful of their own fellow-labourers was a man of prayer; a man who did nothing and spoke nothing without casting himself on a higher strength than his own.

"The only other feature of his religious character that I shall venture to notice is the childlike simplicity of his faith. No

man was more able to have suggested doubts upon the authority or meaning of a troublesome passage of Scripture; but no man was less disposed to do so. He had gone through, I believe, at an early period of his life, deep trials upon some points of the Christian system. But he had come out of the furnace without even the 'smell of burning.' From the first moment that I knew him he was, to the best of my belief, a sound and orthodox Christian. He worshipped the Trinity in Unity. He rested every hope on Christ as a Divine Redeemer, and on the Holy Spirit as the teacher, comforter, and sanctifier of the soul. And on this strong foundation he built for eternity. And I believe that he will realise, through countless ages, the immeasurable benefit of such a faith, testified, as it was in his case, by a corresponding temper and practice.

"Before I quit the subject of religion, I must refer to the charge often brought against him of not being a sound Churchman. And this at least must be admitted, that he rendered a less exclusive homage to the Church of England than some of its most ardent friends would desire. At the same time he felt the highest admiration of its services, which he used much both in his family and in private, and regarded it as an instrument of the very highest value in the resistance of error and support of truth. But it is impossible to deny that he attached less importance to the forms and ceremonial of religion than, as I think, either a just appreciation of the weakness of human nature, or the whole analogy of Scripture, would justify and demand. Perhaps his early history in some degree explains this defect, if I may so call it, in the philosophy of his religion. Though he received baptism as an infant in the Church of England, his early education was mainly conducted by one who did not belong to that communion. When, through his marriage, and under a still loftier and holier influence, he came to feel something of the real value and power of religion, he was thrown, not only among Churchmen, but among 'Friends' of the very highest spiritual attainments. Was it to be wondered at, that, without any great stock of ecclesiastical knowledge, he should be led to sink the exterior of religion a little below its just level, and to forget the casket, in the strength of his interest for the jewel contained in it?

"As far as the imputation of bad Churchmanship is founded

on those speeches in Parliament in which he advocates the appropriation of a part of the income of the Irish Bishops to the purposes of education, or expresses his preference for a poor over a rich clergy, I cannot admit its justice. I do not indeed think with him, that such was the state of religion in Ireland as to admit the appropriation of a single shilling of its Church income to other purposes. The business of the legislature was, I conceive, not to alienate the income of the Church, but to compel the holders of it to a just application of it, or, in other words, to a zealous discharge of their high and solemn duties. Neither can I think, with your honoured father, that anything would be gained to religion, especially in a highly refined and civilised state of society, by so lowering the income of the higher orders of the clergy as to limit their intercourse, upon equal terms, with the higher orders of society in other classes. But I must do him the justice to say, that his object was not to impoverish any class of ministers of religion, and what he took from the rich he was most anxious to give to the poor among the clergy. This may have been an error; but it was an error thoroughly compatible with the strictest loyalty to the Church.

"I must, however, make haste to touch upon a few of what I may call the leading characteristics of his *moral* qualities.

"In the first place, then, if ever I knew an honest man, it was your father. He always appeared to me to be the very soul of integrity and honour. To this feature in his character I believe that every man acquainted with him, in public or in private life, would be ready to set his seal.

"In the next place he was a man of indomitable courage. If, like the Chevalier Bayard, he was 'sans reproche,' he was also 'sans peur.' His grappling with a mad dog rather than suffer him to rush into the crowded streets, was a just type of his Parliamentary life. There were occasions when nothing but the stoutest heart could have encountered the hostility to which he was exposed. It was then that he often reminded me of that glowing passage —

> 'Come one, come all—this rock shall fly
> From its firm base as soon as I.'

"I should not do him justice in thus speaking of his courage if I neglected to mention that combined with this there was a

spirit of the very deepest tenderness. The union of these two qualities in any very high degree appears to me extremely rare. It seems to solve the riddle of Samson, 'Out of the strong came forth sweetness.' The hurry of life and press of business often appear not to leave time for sympathy; but I never found him too busy to be kind; and there are many who have lasting reasons to acknowledge the largeness of his heart and the liberality of his hand.

"In speaking of his tenderness and sympathy I have glanced at what I may perhaps call a ruling principle and passion of his mind—I mean a spirit of intense benevolence. He walked through the world like a man passing through the wards of an hospital, and stooping down on all sides to administer help where it was needed. But not only this: he had, as I have heard a dear friend of his and mine express it, 'a singular power of realising to his own mind distant and unseen suffering; of making it his own; and, upon the deep compassion which it inspired, of founding a course of deliberate and sustained action.' Common sympathy is awakened by visible and tangible sorrow, and then perhaps, 'melts into the air.' His sympathy was awakened by men he had never seen, and he gave the best years of his life to their welfare.

"But I must now pass from this higher ground, to say a word on the subject of what may be termed his *social* qualities.

"At the period of his life when you began to be able to appreciate his character, his bodily and mental powers had both sustained considerable injury. Especially after the failure of the African Expedition, he was, if I may so speak, but the ghost of himself. I do not say, as was recorded of a distinguished person after a great calamity, that 'he never smiled again.' Domestic happiness, an approving conscience, a present God and Saviour, and the bright hopes of eternity, made such a state of gloom impossible to him. And occasionally the original man broke out from behind the cloud. But still it was evident to all, and, I think, at all times, that a great storm had broken over him. That gaiety, which was natural, and which had lent so much charm to an earlier period of his life, now recurred but rarely. I can remember him, year after year, when his conversation was as bright, racy, and amusing as that of most men that I have ever known. I believe that those who were present at a

dinner given by him to Lord Stanley and the other members of the cabinet, after the abolition of slavery, will not easily forget the chastened gaiety, the occasional touches of harmless sarcasm, the sparlings of quiet easy wit, the glowing thanks to the friends of emancipation, the generous feeling towards its enemies, and the heartfelt gratitude to God, which breathed in his several short addresses to his company. No one, I think, could look at him or listen to him without feeling that it was 'a good thing,' even as far as this world is concerned, to be bold and constant in a righteous cause, and to live, not for ourselves, but for God and for mankind.

"But I must here come to an end. I have lost a delightful friend, and you an invaluable father. God grant that his image may be constantly before us, to quicken our sluggish souls in the pursuit of those high, manly, and Christian qualities, of which he was so eminent an example!

"I am yours affectionately,

"J. W. CUNNINGHAM."

APPENDIX TO CHAPTER XVII.

Table of Slave Population in Eleven West India Islands.—(*Parl. Papers.*)

Name of Colony.	Number of Slaves Registered.		Number of Slaves Registered.		Decrease.		
	In the Year.		In the Year.		In Years.	Total.	By Manumissions.
Demerara and Essequibo -	1817	77,163	1832	65,517	15	11,646	nil.
Jamaica - -	1817	346,150	1832	302,666	15	43,484	4,691
Montserrat -	1817	6,610	1827	6,262	10	348	116
Nevis - - -	1817	9,602	1831	9,142	14	460	207
St. Kitt's - -	1817	20,168	1831	19,085	14	1,083	968
St. Lucia - -	1816	16,285	1831	13,348	15	2,937	889
St. Vincent -	1817	25,218	1831	22,997	14	2,221	475
Tobago - -	1819	15,470	1832	12,091	13	3,379	192
Trinidad - -	1816	25,544	1828	23,776	12	1,768	1,712
Bahamas - -	1822	10,808	1828	9,268	6	1,540	202
Bermudas - -	1820	5,176	1830	4,371	10	805	nil.
Total -		558,194		488,523	Average 12 Years.	69,671	9,452

Decrease, exclusive of manumissions, of the slave population of eleven (out of the twenty-one) islands, in twelve years

=69,671

9,452=60,219.

Again: in 1845, tables were published showing the changes of population between 1832 (two years before slavery was abolished) and 1844 (ten years after its abolition), in ten of the West India Islands; but we have no separate account of the number imported.

Tables of Population in Ten West India Islands.—(*Parl. Papers.*)

Name of Colony.	1832.	1844.	Increase.
Antigua - - - -	35,412	36,178	766
Dominica - - - -	19,255	22,469	3,214
Grenada - - - -	27,768	28,923	1,155
British Guiana - - -	96,685	98,133	1,448
Barbadoes - - - -	108,150	122,198	14,048
St. Lucia - - - -	17,042	21,001	3,959
St. Vincent - - - -	27,122	27,248	126
Trinidad - - - -	40,250	59,815	19,565
Bahamas - - - -	18,508	25,292	6,784
Honduras - - - -	3,794	10,000	6,206
Total in ten Colonies -	393,986	451,257	57,271

The increase, then, in these ten colonies has averaged nearly 5000 a year since emancipation.

In four colonies the population has decreased,—

Name of Island.	Census in 1832.	Census in 1844.	Decrease.
Montserrat - - - -	7,406	7,365	41
Nevis - - - -	11,882	9,571	2,271
St. Kitt's - - - -	23,697	23,177	520
Tobago - - - -	13,571	13,208	363
Total -	56,516	53,321	3,195

The total increase, therefore, in the fourteen islands in which alone we have any means of ascertaining the changes of population, has amounted to 54,076 souls.

THE END.

LONDON:
A. and G. A. SPOTTISWOODE,
New-street-Square.